

SPECIAL REPORT:

ATLANTA CHILD MURDERS

RE-OPEN THE CASE!

PETER GABRIEL
UNDER THE MASK

OZZY OSBOURNE

THE ROCK MADMAN TALKS
ABOUT SEX, DRUGS, AND "SUICIDE"

MORRISSEY
JELLO BIAFRA
BODEANS
KRAZY KAT
JOHN LURIE
TEST DEPARTMENT

SYMPATHY FOR
THE DEVIL IN ETHIOPIA

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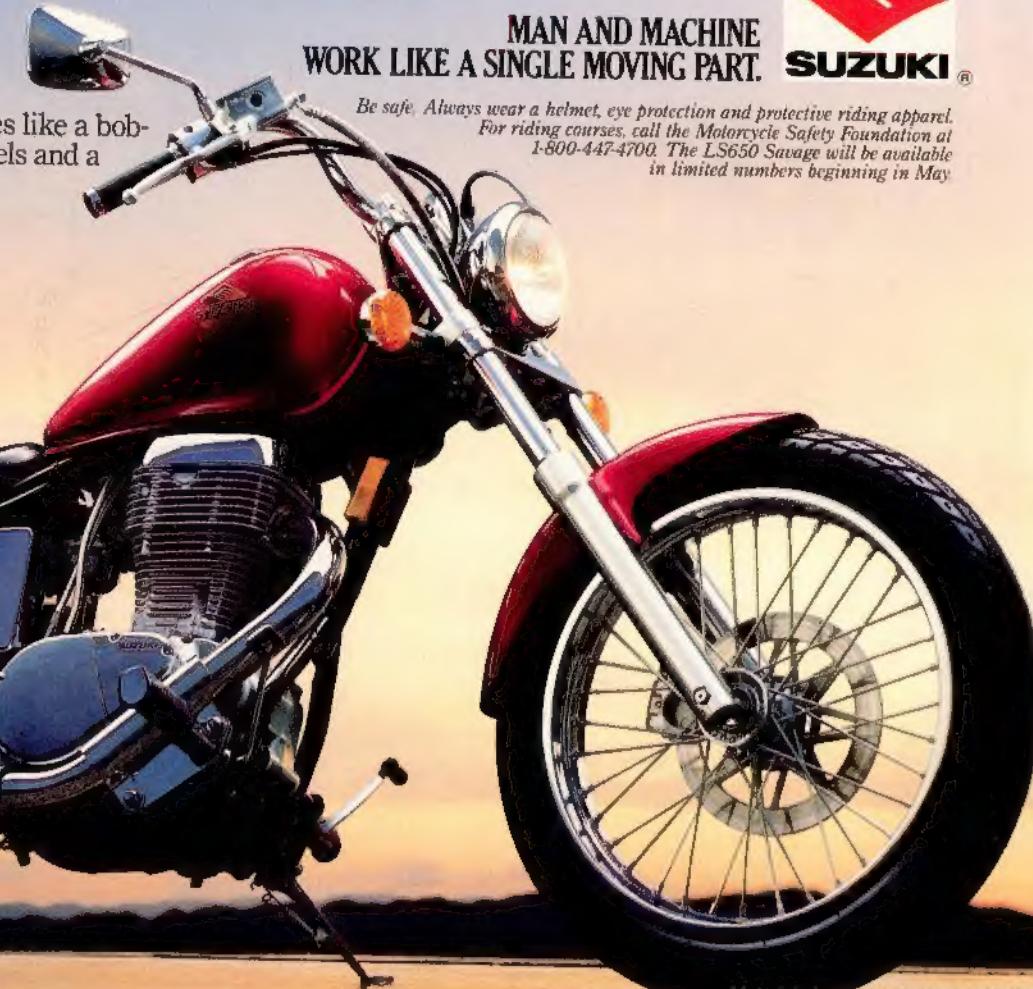
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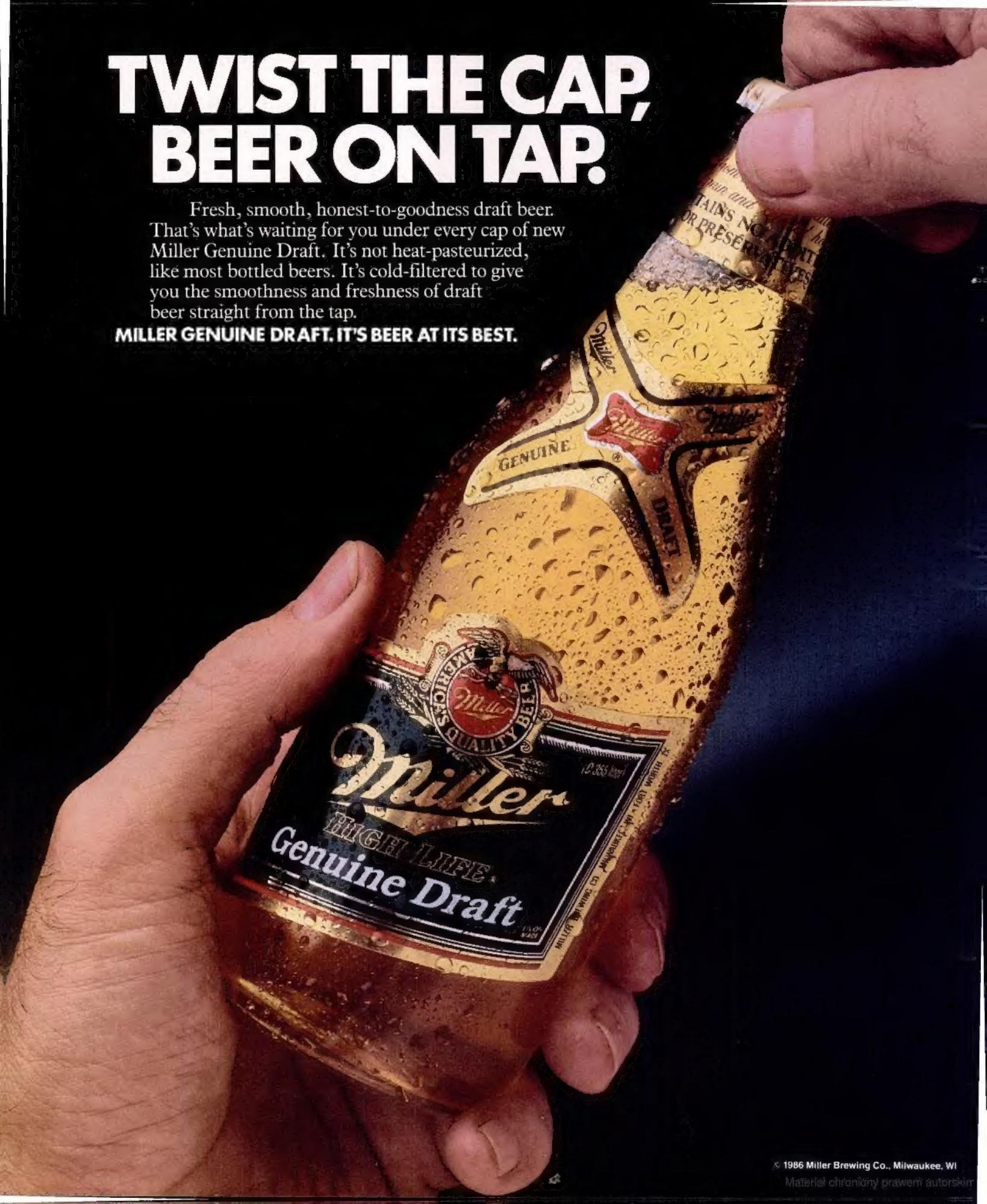


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TOP SPIN

There's a great short story by Stephen Vincent Benét called "The Devil and Daniel Webster," in which the devil, having negotiated for a man's soul, comes to collect it, whereupon the man, now regretting the transaction, goes for help. He seeks salvation from the famous orator Daniel Webster, who agrees to argue the case. And argue they do, all night in a New England kitchen until finally at dawn Webster has triumphed, Satan has capitulated, and all rights to the soul return to its original owner.

The story is a marvelous piece of mythology, partly because Satan is portrayed not as an odious character, but like the nameless executioner, just someone whose lot has been cast in the shadows of our bright world, a figure whose career was an unpopular one.

There is something romantic about the devil when you defuse his malignancy. He assumes the vaguely harmless stature of a misunderstood foreigner.

When Bob Geldof talked of being prepared to "shake hands with the devil on my left and on my right to get to the people we are meant to help," the proclamation sounded heroic and sure to succeed. But Live Aid and all the relief agencies operating in government-controlled Ethiopia are literally dealing with a devil, and there is nothing romantic about it.

"Sympathy for the Devil" (pg. 64) by Robert Keating is the continuation of our investigation into relief funds exploitation in Ethiopia and shows precisely the hell Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam has turned Ethiopia into.

Mengistu's Ethiopia is the worst violator of human rights in the world, according to both the US Senate Committee on Human Rights and Amnesty International. More people have died under Mengistu than died in Uganda under Idi Amin. During Mengistu's infamous reign of terror, 33,000 students and dissidents were killed and their bodies sold back to their parents for the cost of the bullets "wasted."

Even those who were simply victims of the famine felt the cold claw of their ruler—the famine in Ethiopia was and remains an unnatural one, created far more by government policy and acts of war, including unlimited taxation of food, resettlement, bombing and napalming farmland, and diversion of relief food, than the drought. Recent defector Dawit Wolde Giorgis, who headed Ethiopia's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, told *The New York Times* that, categorically, "famine was a policy problem, not [one of] drought." In 1982, says relief expert Bonnie Holcomb, Ethiopians had

enough food to feed themselves three times over, but the government took the food in taxes.

When the head of a household can't pay his taxes, he is put to work in a labor camp—farming the government's land. In a system reminiscent of sixth century medieval England, Ethiopians are made to farm government land during the best days of the farming season. They are left with the less valuable period of the season to work on their own meager crops.

This is the political environment and leader that Western relief agencies deal with. Not happily, of course, but what's the difference? Nothing to Mengistu. Every day that Live Aid and World Vision and the rest pretend that what's really going on isn't, or that their food and medicine isn't being diverted and exploited and distilled into the eventual currency with which Mengistu buys more Russian arms, lengthens the Ethiopian nightmare.

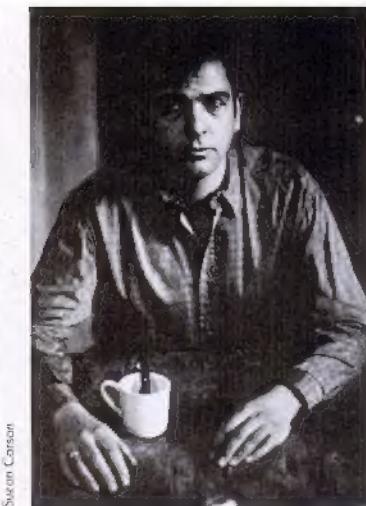
And as long as the same relief agencies, who know and discuss among themselves what's going on, continue to obscure or avoid the truth, they allow Mengistu the protective darkness that he moves under.

Bob Geldof has repeatedly said that he is not a politician, meaning it as some kind of escape clause whenever approached too closely on the subject of the real political situation in Ethiopia. On the scale that Bob Geldof operates on, "no-answers" are unacceptable answers. It's a good thing to know one's limits, it's even better to keep within them. I believe Geldof got lost in the political jungle of Ethiopia. It is evident that he knew what was happening. Presumably he did not know what to do about it. Since he is not a politician, he should not have tried to go it alone as a statesman.

If he didn't understand or know how to handle what was going on—I can't believe he knew and didn't care—then he should have blown the whistle on Mengistu. Because this is not a matter of political ideology—whether or not to support communism—this is still a humanitarian issue: whether or not to go on being used as an instrument in an overall campaign of brutal and remorseless war.

When we look at Ethiopia from this distance, we see a mirage. There is a shimmering illusion of hope. But there is nothing illusory or unclear about what Mengistu is doing to his own people.

In the bright distance we see reflecting glints and we take them to be the grateful smiles of saved people. We are hypnotized by the glare. We do not see that some of those bright reflections, like slivers of mirror, are



Anton Corbijn



U.N. Photo

steel nails being hammered into Ethiopia's coffin.

Devils can work magic like that.

As we were about to go to press with this issue, the discovery of extraordinary information in the Atlanta child murders case forced us to decide to hold up the presses and prepare the story for this issue.

In June 1981, after 22 months and 28 murders, Wayne Williams was arrested for the crimes and, in rushed trial, found guilty—not of the murders of the young boys, but of the killing of two men in their early 20s.

The case rested there, but not the tragedy. For the mothers of the dead boys, there has been an aching for the truth, for justice, for relief from the

anguish of not knowing what happened to their sons.

Our story is the remarkable work of two gifted young writers—Robert Keating and Barry Michael Cooper.

We found shocking evidence in Atlanta that demands the reopening of the case.

—Bob Cuccione, Jr.

Top left: gentleman punk and free speech advocate Jello Biafra. Right: Peter Gabriel sans masks. Bottom: While Western relief agencies, politicians, and celebrities continue to make their "deals with the devil," the suffering and dying continue in Ethiopia.

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John Isaac/UN Photo

Letters

Edited by Karen Dolan

Live Aid

Congratulations on your courageous article on Live Aid and Ethiopia. There have been a number of groups which have been decrying the resettlement program and condemning Ethiopia's wars against minorities with very little attention being given. Our organization has been involved in aid to areas held by independence movements in Eritrea and Tigre for over five years. As pointed out in the article, these areas have been systematically starved by the Ethiopian government. We continue to provide emergency aid and successful long-term development projects despite the disruption of warfare in Eritrea and Tigre. While condemning the Soviet support for the brutal Ethiopian regime, we must also remember that the same war was prosecuted by Emperor Haile Selassie with US assistance for 15 years.

John Graham
OXFAM Canada

The clincher in renewing my subscription to your magazine was your article about Live Aid ("Live Aid: The Terrible Truth," July). I am a previous donor to the Live Aid cause and believe that my \$25 can work to stop the famine in Africa. After all, the first priority to completing such a task is funding. The error in Live Aid/USA for Africa and Band Aid Trust was the call to the masses for political pressure. Where were the calls for letter-writing campaigns to congressmen and foreign ambassadors to urge action against the problems *within* the obvious famine?

Someone once said that beauty is only skin deep. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of tragedy, because there lies within each tragedy a root cause beneath the glitz and glitter sprinkled by bleeding-heart liberal performers who, in most cases, lack the education and firsthand knowledge for an accurate analysis of the situation.

It's not too late to reverse the errors of the past two years, but let's do it now before we play into the hands of another Marxist government.

Michael J. Siffer
Toledo, OH

I applaud your efforts to expose the consequences of aid without awareness. I would like, however, to offer a few criticisms and suggestions.

Though the facts about Ethiopia are

few and hard to come by, I feel that your coverage of the situation could have been more thorough. What I feel was lacking in the article—and this goes beyond Robert Keating's excellent writing and Nina Guccione's dogged efforts to uncover the cover-up—is a background to the Ethiopian situation: a description, for instance, of what these camps look like, an explanation of Ethiopia's involvement in the various wars, and the reasoning behind the Reagan Administration decision to withdraw aid.

If you print an article charging Geldof, Live Aid, Band Aid, etc. with either not getting or reporting the facts straight, those charges should be backed up by an impetus to provide the largest sector possible with the truth. Placing Prince on the cover obscures this impetus and guarantees that the truth will only reach Prince fans and SPIN fans.

Millions of Ethiopians should not take a backseat to our over-puffed egos, or, by the same token, to editorial policy. When they do, the two—policy and ego—begin to look too much alike.

Elizabeth Varnedoe
Providence, R.I.

Last August, my friends and I were backpacking through Europe. We had boarded a train to take us from Naples to Rome when a darkly tanned man sat down across from us. We started chatting. He was puzzled by my red hair. In

his country, he said, there were no redheads. He was from Ethiopia. "What is it like there?" we asked. "How did you get out?" He had been a nurse in the war, and the horror he had seen showed in his eyes. He had escaped a month ago by bribing officials, obtaining fake IDs, and through the efforts of friends. He was waiting for relocation somewhere in the US or in Canada to start a new life.

His country was no longer his home. Perhaps this was because the government wiped out his hometown in a show of strength five years ago, killing his parents and his two sisters. Or perhaps because he saw the government murdering the poor, disorganized tribes that had the strength or the stupidity to rebel. Or it might have been that he saw the government ignoring the pleas of the people for food because starving people don't fight back. Or perhaps he saw the money and the food from naive people and Live Aid going straight for guns.

He told me that in August 1985. Since that time how many dollars have gone to help support the brutally repressive government of Ethiopia and the USSR itself? I applaud SPIN for breaking this story, and I hope that in the future people will have the sense and the courage to look past simplistic idealism and deal with the complex reality of politics.

Laura A. McKenna
Tenafly, NJ

The Rolling Cocktails?

Open letter to Bill Wyman:

Having heard you're not touring this year and because we're firing our bass player, we thought you might be looking for outside employment. Come join us!

Cecil B. de Mille
Lead singer, Cocktails From Hell
Santa Barbara, CA

P.S. If Charlie wants to play, we'll fire our drummer.

P.P.S. If Keith and Woody aren't doing anything, give them a call.

P.P.P.S. If Mick wants to sing, I'll quit.

Girls Together Outrageously

As a fellow raunchy woman in rock, I'm all for women being themselves and not conforming to any stereotype. But as for the Pandoras (FLASH, July)—that is a case of trying too hard to prove a point verbally when the music should do the talking. And after hearing the Pandoras music I know why they have such big mouths.

Kiy Rauchette
Rochester, NY

Correction

The guy in the pictures with Siouxsie Sioux on page 66 of the June issue was incorrectly identified as Steve Severin. He is, of course, Budgie, the Banshees' drummer. SPIN regrets the error.



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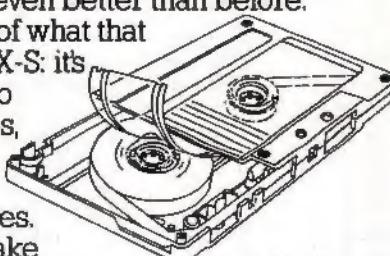
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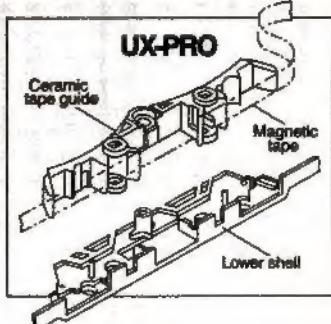


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FLASH

Edited by
James Truman
and
John Leland

BEEN HAZED AND CONFUSED



Monica Daae

If Hasil Adkins had led the South during the Civil War, the Confederate flag would be waving freely, and doin' the Hunch would be the law of the land. Adkins, 49, a West Virginia native, is a walkin', talkin', yowlin', yodellin' one-man band. He makes up songs on the spot, switches keys at will. He is a human siren who could give a human beatbox a run for his money.

Haze's songs about "The Hunch" and "Sex Crazy Baby" are cause to make a nice girl blush. Specially with his groanin' and gruntin'.

Hasil's lines like, "Helloo, baby/We gotta date/I gotta date to cut your head off" sound like a demented Big Bopper from beyond.

Isn't it kinda hard to get dates when you're threatening to cut their heads off?

"No, it's easy," he drawls and twangs and chain smokes. Hasil goes on to describe a body of water on his property in Madison, West Virginia, and how, on occasion, he has floated something in it that looks like a head. "When the girls come around, the girls I date, they come and look at it and then come back and say, 'Is that that thang . . . you cut their heads off?' A lot of 'em run off that way. I tried to tell 'em I was jokin' with 'em, and they vanished. Gone." *Would you explain how to do the Hunch for SPIN?*

"It's more easier to do it if you done it than what it is to explain it. Your middle part is all you move. It's a good dance, if you do it right. There's a lot of 'em that does it and no good about it."

What do you look for in a woman?

"She's gotta be good on the Hunchin' part. Then she don't lose her head that way."

Hasil Adkins has been playing since he was six or seven years old. He made his first guitar out of a milk can and soon graduated to one made from a 2½-gallon water bucket.

Some of his songs have acquired renown. The Cramps recorded "She Said" a few years back. "I don't like the way they done it. I mean parts of it, I do. They didn't know all the words. I think they tore it up:

"When I woke up this morning
You should have seen what I had in bed
It jumped up out of the bed
Pulled its hair down in its eyes
Looked at me like a dyin' can of commodity meat
And she said,

WOO E HA HA WOO E HA HA WO WOO WOO E E E E"

Adkins's following is rabid and rapidly growing on both sides of the Atlantic. He has two records on Norton Records, the "Haze's House Party" EP and *Out to Hunch* album.

Haze's audience knows his songs, and can, after a fashion, yowl along. No mean feat. Among the new ones due out on the next Norton release are "Punchy-Wunchy-Wickie-Wackey-Woo"—dedicated to his girlfriend—"Chicken Flop," and Merle Haggard's "I'm Turning Off a Memory." "I like love songs," he says. "I cut 'Turning Off a Memory' to show everybody that I ain't completely crazy, I ain't all the way gone. I gotta bunch more scary songs in my mind that I'm gonna record. I really made up 'No More Hot Dogs' for little kids."

Among Hasil's admirers is Ben Vaughn, who has played on the same bill as Haze and put him up as a house guest. "His records are so badly recorded that it's an art," says Vaughn. "It's the ultimate backlash to what's going on in the music business today. To put on a Hasil Adkins record, where everything is recorded with VU meters bouncing in the red, and to put on after that a digital Thompson Twins record — big difference."

Adkins played for over 30 years without anyone really listening. "I always had that dream that it would change," Haze says, "to the way it's goin' now. I just like what I'm doin'. I just like music, and I woulda kept on till I die."

— Sukey Pett

IN THROUGH THE OUT DOOR

"I'm a musician by default," says Pete Shelley. "It's just that I can express my emotions better in songs. There has always been something there to be communicated that can't be expressed in just words." Shelley is referring to his extraordinary new LP, *Heaven and the Sea*. After a three-year, self-imposed silence, he has returned to recording with a collection of relentlessly catchy pop songs whose boisterousness is continually undercut by bleak, harrowing lyrics. More than ever before, Shelley is laying bare his soul: These are songs of emotional torture and desolation, confronting feelings of hopelessness ("Life Without Reason"), loneliness ("On Your Own"), and paranoia ("They're Coming for You"). Is this man a manic depressive? "No, I just like weirding 'up' pop music to slit-your-wrists lyrics."

Nevertheless, Shelley's own career has had its downside. After disbanding the Buzzcocks in 1980, he went into virtual exile, leading a reclusive, solitary life in Manchester. And then, having relaunched himself as a solo performer with the *Homosapien* and *XL 7* albums, he again withdrew, besieged by record company and management problems. He sheepishly refers to the new record as his "third career"—which it is, in the sense that it neatly combines elements of the first two. In Britain, where Shelley has had to struggle against a popular unwillingness to see him as anything but a boast from the past who mistakenly traded his buzz-saw guitar for a synthesizer, *Heaven and the Sea* is regarded as a true re-

turn to form. In the US, where he's best known for the shiny electropop of "Homosapien" (banned from British radio owing to its allegedly gay lyrics), the new record's surprise lies in the fullness of sound and texture that he has grafted onto the disco beat.

Shelley himself is impatient with such comparisons. "If I hadn't left the Buzzcocks, I wonder if anyone would have noticed the joins in the material," he says. "Because the Buzzcocks' songs were never issued in chronological order, they all came from different periods. Lots of my later stuff, like *Homosapien*, was written pre-Buzzcocks. The big difference is that with the band I'd say, 'I've got this song,' and before I had time to sit down and think about it, somebody would go 'one, two, three, four,' and we'd be off. Now I'm able to build on them and refine them."

Making the album—in the Cars' Boston studio—appears to have been a cathartic experience. The brooding introspection of the lyrics is a world away from the enthusiasm with which Shelley discusses his music and recent return to playing live. This time around he claims to be well aware of the "little traps of success" and intends to avoid them. "When I say that I've no desire to be famous, and I just want people to hear and appreciate my music, I'm aware it's like saying you enjoy eating cake, but you don't want to get fat," he says. "But I've always maintained that the real reason I make music is to corrupt the minds of the young."

—Chris Kirk



Scot Meier/Reinhardt

Smoke on the Water



It is a well-known fact that all rock musicians originally take up their instruments in order to get laid. But like everybody else, they soon find this incredibly disillusioning. Which is why debut albums lurch into the void with an ejaculation and a prayer, and second albums are cynically world-weary.

By their third albums, bands know their

way around. They've toured the world, done Budokan, picked up drug habits. They've cut tracks with Sly and Robbie or the Tower of Power horn section in a Caribbean studio, sworn to countless journalists that they used to smoke pot but now they don't even do that anymore, and become so incorrigible that they drop Nile Rodgers's name in their sleep. They know

what makes rock 'n' roll tick. They live for food.

Greasy, fatty, carcinogenic, yule—they want something that tastes as good cold as it does hot and that they can eat with their hands. Your rock star lives for barbecue.

Labor Day is the preferred holiday among rock stars. They spend all of August worrying about what they'll bring to their Labor Day barbecues. A bad showing can ruin a reputation faster than an indiscreet hotel photo. Here's what the stars are brewing up for this year's fete.

Ted Nugent's Wang Dang Sweet Blue Gill Fillets

Heat mesquite grill over coals until white hot. Place blue gill fillets on it—or, as the Nugie says, "slap that prick on the grill. We get our mesquite from webbacks, who gather it for free." Smother with Kraft barbecue sauce doctored with Tabasco Grill until fillets turn white, then flip. Ted's advice: "You salute with your left hand while eating with your right."

Bannah McDaniel's (D.M.C.'s mother) Raising Hell Spare ribs

Steam one slab of baby-back ribs for 20 minutes. Towel dry. Sprinkle with garlic salt and pepper. Cover in soy sauce. Soak overnight. The next day, grill with soy sauce marinade slowly until brown on each side (roughly 30 minutes). Brush with

barbecue sauce, thinned with mustard and a little vinegar. Grill until blackened.

Louisville Slugger Garlic Potatoes à la Antietam's Tara Key

Scrub a couple pounds of new potatoes. Melt six tbs. of butter in a large skillet. Put whole potatoes in skillet with parsley and a handful of unpeeled garlic cloves. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove cover and simmer for another 10 minutes. Above all, says Tara, "be gentle with the potatoes." Potatoes are now ready. Squeeze garlic cloves between thumb and forefinger and spread on toast. Tara's barbecue suggestion: "It's always nice to bring a good slaw. Just follow the basic *Joy of Cooking* recipe, but go easy on the vinegar or else it gets nasty."

Vake Wofgramm's (the Jet's mother) Crush on You Beef

Marinate eight to 12 pounds of brisket overnight in: four tbs. Worcestershire sauce, one tbs. Liquid Smoke (the crucial ingredient), one lbs. celery seed, one lbs. onion salt, one tsp. garlic powder, three lbs. soy sauce. The next day, wrap in foil and bake at 250° for five to six hours. While this is cooking, combine one cup of catsup, one-half cup brown sugar, one tbs. mustard, one-half chopped onion, one-half tsp. celery salt, and one-half tsp. Tabasco in a skillet and cook for 30 minutes. Pour over brisket when finished and eat.



Kristine Lonsdale

Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap

Karen Finley sits demurely in a cotton housedress, sipping coffee at her kitchen table, surrounded by the tools of her art. She's the girl who, while pouring chocolate syrup or cling peaches down her body, rips off her party dress onstage or wedges canned yams between her buttocks as she rants in an alternating high whine and low growl about passing gas and fucking grannies and tumors and "cervix bangers" and "puttin' it up the wrong alley, baby."

A typical Finley routine swoops from eros to violence to power with the incantatory rhythm of an evangelist. "And then he put it up the right hole," she rants in "I'm on Ass Man," her contribution to *Uproar*, a compilation of New York performance artists. "Ooo, ooo, you call that passion? You call that romance? You don't know what it's like for a woman to get cystitis... I mean, give it to me in the right hole, that right alley, that right tunnel of love. I'm a three-hundred pound hussy who sits down and eats thirty Hershey bars... Not like some anorexic ostrich like you, baby... ooo, bulimia, mama... upchucking all over the house in your stiletto heels."

One of Finley's goals is "to play right before a Yankee game."

"I'm totally a romantic," she says. "I'd love it if we had a perfect world and I could get up onstage and go on about the colors of flowers." When Finley talks dirty, her taboo-trouncing raps loop around each other, buttressed by the four-letter-word chant that is her syntax. This is no strip show—she has a

complicated image, and if it arouses, it also stimulates a variety of emotions at once. "The power of language," she says, "is sometimes the only power people have in their lives. People have been writing in this language for years. What I do is simply take it another step."

"I like to get people laughing first," Finley explains, "and then I like to get them to think." She says her work is more about power than sex—she doesn't consider herself a pornographer. She insists, though, that "pornography is an incredibly important part of our lives. We have to find new ways of expressing desire, especially in these conservative times, and because of the prevalence of sexual diseases."

Finley has performed consistently in the States and Europe for the last eight years and will be touring again in the fall, possibly with Lydia Lunch, a friend with whom she performed in San Francisco in July. Their dialogue is the new girl-talk. "Lydia starts her monologue, and I interrupt her," Finley describes. "I call her on her bad attitude, and then we collaborate. We agree on sexual subjects. I ask advice on premature ejaculation and talk to her about penis envy."

"I don't care what people think about me," Finley asserts. "Any disturbance that my audience might feel... well, they're supposed to be uncomfortable. The more media attention I get, the more critical people are going to get. Those who wouldn't ordinarily come to see me perform now have to read about what I do. They don't choose to come see me, but, that's how it goes, buddy. We've been disturbed for centuries, being mother/whores, getting catcalls on the street. So I say, get a taste."

—Barbara O'Dair

And the Cradle Will Rock

There's a contradiction at work in New York hip hop. Whenever a posse of hip-hop gangsters turns a rap party into a freestyle clean-and-jerk chain-snatching competition, that's called a Brooklyn crowd. Brooklyn audiences have a reputation for premature delinquency. But the top Brooklyn rap groups—Whistle, UTFO, and the Real Roxanne—are the most innocent teen bubble-gum acts in the genre.

The newest rappers on the Brooklyn line are three guys from East Flatbush (the neighborhood where UTFO, Full Force, and the Real Roxanne all live) who call themselves Whistle. "I would say that we're a pop rap group," says 18-year-old Jazz, as he munches from a bag of grapes. "It's not really hard, and it's not soft like a ballad rap. I wanted to be a singer and a rapper both. Basically, we're gonna try to do both. Then maybe branch over to singing, or maybe just keep both." Whistle may also be the first true second-generation rap group. Jazz is the younger brother of the Kangol Kid from UTFO, to whom the newcomers bear a more than passing resemblance. Whistle's other rapper, 21-year-old K. D. (for Kool Doobie), used to be in UTFO. The group's DJ, Silver Spinner, 21, was once UTFO's road manager. And their producers are Kangol with Hitman Howie Tee, who also produces the Real Roxanne.

So what's the difference between Whistle and UTFO? "They got a real ladies'-man image," says Jazz. "They go up onstage and look all nice and proper and cute, and make all the ladies scream. We go onstage, and we're neat also, but we just broaden it. Come up with a name like Whistle and you gotta do something. So instead of making it just one image, we make it three. K.D.'s the funny guy, Sil is the silent type who makes you want to know more, and I'm just the cute one that skips across the stage and everything like that. I play to the girls more. I have to smile a lot, laugh a lot, point to girls a lot, make gestures to girls a lot. We give everybody their own thing, and that's their job onstage."

If it sounds calculated, it is. Even Paul McCartney's status as the Designated Cute One in the Beatles was always unofficial. K. D. says of the Whistle approach that "we got our sound from our producers. Howie always wanted to produce a record with cartoon melodies on it. He had them all made up." But as with all good bubble gum, the music's obvious affectations only make it more buoyant. "Just Buggin'," Whistle's debut snack, was an enormous hit in the US and followed Doug E. Fresh's "The Show" into the English Top Ten on the strength of a support tour with Big Audio Dynamite. "It's not really the raps so much that people like over there," says K. D., who dropped out of the University of Maryland to pursue his rap career, "but the music and beats. Because they tried to push L. L. [Cool J] out there, and it didn't go over too well."

"I think it's getting easier for rappers now," says Jazz. "It used to be like a rapper



Whistle: (L-R) K.D., Jazz, Silver Spinner

Arthur L. Field/Rock Will Service

would have to make three and four and five records before he would get known. Now he can make one. We just came off the Fresh Fest [a national rap-tour package resembling the old Dick Clark extravaganzas; Whistle played three songs each night]. Joeski Love is on the Fresh Fest. And it's like, we're one-record groups. It's easy for rappers now."

Whistle just issued their debut album. With their pictures in record stores across the country, things might not be so easy for the Cute One. "Sometimes if it's a big rap thing, all the girls come to the hotel and they just wait there, and they either go up and try to pick us out, or just wait till they see us. It's crazy. It's fun, though."

I'll bet.

—John Leland

HAMMER OF THE GODS



After you've seen and heard it all, there's still "no go."

No go is the noise of the dispossessed, the unmistakeable clang of dissent and collapse. "It is the loudest noise you can get for nothing," says Bixi Bargeld, of Berlin's now-defunct Einsturzende Neubauten. Everything else is just music.

The noisiest champions of no go in Britain are Test Department, a five-piece from Deptford, southeast London's answer to the Bronx. Deptford is grim. Test Department's music is a direct response to Deptford's urban decay.

"Our position is ambiguous," explains Graham (all members

of Test Department use only their first names). "On the one hand we're sounding a death knell, accelerating the slide down the downhill slope and, therefore, pushing people to recognize it. On the other, we're celebrating the spirit to stand up and fight against it."

Their weapons in this fight are percussion instruments improvised from material found among the ruins—discarded metal, burned-out cars, radiators, water tanks. They substitute treated electronics, pirated voices, second-source noises for guitars and crisscross thumping military-march beats with intense African rhythms. They add to their grotesque parody of the British Empire by heralding their noise with bugle calls.

They perform in multimedia spectacles using film, dance, and gymnastics in unusual places. During the '84-'85 coal miners' strike, Test Department played benefits with the miners' choir. The group held its latest show in an abandoned art deco railway depot and named the event after their new LP, *The Unacceptable Face of Freedom*. And they've recently returned from a tour of Poland, Hungary, and Czechoslovakia. "We were better treated in the East than we were in the West," recalls Toby. "That was partly to do with novelty—the border guards couldn't believe what they were seeing when we arrived in a battered blue bus carrying one and a half tons of scrap metal! But it was in Holland where we were trailed by riot police and France where two of us were beaten up by customs men. On the other hand, we had to cancel a Czech concert when an underground event by Nico the night before was busted."

Test Department mistrusts any situation where the state of the art is the art of the state. So they establish their events as no-go zones, where personal autonomy is the rule. All hostile ideologies must be checked in at the door.

—Chris Bohm

Test Department with three stone-faces from Deptford.

Immigrant Song

After the Northern Irish bubble-gum punks the Undertones split up in 1983, singer Feargal Sharkey transformed himself into a pocket Rod Stewart for the CD generation and left the rest of the band to fend for themselves. Guitarists Damian and Sean O'Neill rallied round their Television and Beefheart records, recruited a couple of friends and a similarly stranded American singer, and formed That Petrol Emotion. The group's debut album, *Manic Pop Thrill*, is now out in the UK and will be released here shortly.

That Petrol Emotion write two types of songs: wild noise-guitar things over which Steve Mack growls like Beefheart in a bad mood and cheesy ballads that one writer has compared to *Wings*. "I have no qualms about people saying we sound like Paul McCartney," counters singer Mack. "He wrote some really sappy stuff, but he also wrote some fucking great songs." The wild songs pit two guitars against each other with a loud simplicity that belies the group's disregard for technical proficiency. And their affection for guitars. "Groups like Cabaret Voltaire use keyboards in the way they should be used," says Mack, "but generally the keyboard thing has been done to death. I guess the guitar has in some ways, but it's so versatile. You can make an absolute screechy noise, but you can also take that noise and channel it into

something good like Sonic Youth."

It's no coincidence that Mack cites America's prime noise dealers. The band was disconsolate after seeing Sonic Youth play, moaning "We'll never be that good" for days. That Petrol Emotion include covers of Pere Ubu's "Non-Alignment Pact" and early Beefheart songs in their live set. It's that atonal roar again.

"Atonal?" muses Damian. "That's a good word."

The band's noise also carries a message. While the Undertones were criticized for not writing about the conflicts in Northern Ireland, That Petrol Emotion deal with that part of their background.

Damian: "You've got to go back there to realize. Séan went back there for a year after the Undertones ended and he couldn't get a job or anything. He witnessed all the frustration that was among our friends—what do we do about this, gotta get out of here, all that kind of attitude. So he decided to do songs that were more about it."

"We know we can't change much, but it is a conscience thing. Four of us are Irish, we grew up the same and witnessed horrific things that were happening to our friends. Two people in my class have been killed in the last couple of years. They joined the IRA—for good reasons or bad reasons, it doesn't matter. They're dead now. And it shouldn't be happening. We should be drawing attention to what's going on."

However, TPE don't offer blatant political lyrics like the Redskins or Easterhouse, a song like "Tight-Lipped" can be taken



either at face value or for what it really is—a commentary on UK media coverage of Northern Ireland. Instead, the band slaps the dogmatic rhetoric on liner notes. TPE sleeves have contained notes about plastic bullets, the abuse of women prisoners, and the political situation in Ireland.

Mack: "We don't want to preach, because we don't want to assume that what we know and what we hold to be right is the truth. All we can do is offer our opinions. We can give them a fact or a figure on the back of a sleeve and give them an address where they can get more information about this, they can read about

it and make up their minds for themselves."

"It is a dilemma," says a worried-looking Damian, "that maybe we should be more blunt. There's a war going on there and we should be saying more. But fuck, we're just a pop group, we mean fuck-all, really."

—David Quantick

That Petrol Emotion (L-R) Damian O'Neill, Steve Mack, Sean O'Neill, Ciaran McLaughlin, Réamonn O'Gorman



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HYSC

VAN HALEDON



The Feelies are back with a new album, *The Good Earth*, just six years after their debut, *Crazy Rhythms*, put Haledon, New Jersey, on the map. In the interim, they've changed bassists and drummers, regrouped as an experimental instrumental band called the Wilies, formed the core of Jersey bands Yung Wu and the Trypes, and—in the last year—actually written new songs. "We never really broke up," says guitarist Bill Millon, "we just stopped playing for a time." The Feelies are not prolific. Even at their peak, "we only played four or five times a year," says singer and guitarist Glenn Mercer, the other half of the Feelies' nucleus. All that has changed, however. "Now it seems like we're always playing," says Mercer. "We just played last week. We'll probably play again in a week and a half."

An, those Feelies. Six years and a good couple dozen gigs down the line, they're still the same shy, serious, chemistry-class nerds who at the height of punk fashion wore clothes that didn't fit right and refused to market T-shirts because they said a T-shirt was something you wore under a shirt. Of all the recent bands overtly influenced by the Velvet Underground, the Feelies are probably the only one to draw both their ideal of cool and their musical inspira-

tion from mousy Velvet drummer Maureen Tucker. "A lot has been written about bands sounding like the Velvet Underground," says Millon, who works in a stereo and television store. "But I have yet to hear a band that sounds anything like them. I put the emphasis on the drum lines, the rhythm lines, of Velvet songs like 'Sister Ray' and 'What Goes On?'"

The *Good Earth* is less frenetic, more melodic than *Crazy Rhythms*. The tempos are slower, and there's nothing as dead-end kinetic as songs such as "The Boy With Perpetual Nervousness" or "Loveless Love." There aren't as many drums. "But I think it's more rhythmic," says Mercer. "It's just a greater variety of rhythms."

The Feelies, posing as the Wilies, appear in the upcoming Jonathan Demme film, *Something Wild*. "We met Jonathan Demme the first time we went to California to play, in 1980," says Mercer, "and he wanted to do a film of the band for a real long time, like a concert. But he couldn't raise the money to do it. The band had a pretty low profile. But we kept in touch over the years, and he asked us to be a band in his movie." They recorded five songs for the film, including a Freddy Fender cover, and plan to cut some incidental music. If they become celluloid idols, there is no God.

—John Leland

Yakety Yak

"You're a local band until you get a record contract, then all of a sudden Bruce Springsteen is your competition."

—Sammy Llanas,
the BoDeans

"People who sell drugs but don't do drugs... these are the best people to hang with."

—Jam-Master Jay,
Run-D.M.C.

KAT SCRATCH FEVER

Camus waxed philosophically that he could, after a single day of freedom in the world, live happily off his memories in a hollowed-out tree trunk until his dying day. Nice sentiments, but then he spent his final moments riding a blaze of existential glory in a very nonascetic roadster. Quite unlike the brave George Herriman, the selfless New Orleans Creole who spent 31 years (1913-1944) of hard work drawing countless comic strips for William Randolph Hearst's newspapers, each centered on the revelatory moment of a mouse bopping a cat on the head with a brick.

Herriman's *Krazy Kat* is the wildest comic strip ever made, an alternative universe built out of fewer elements than it takes to construct a shoe box. *Krazy Kat: The Comic Art of George Herriman* documents this early apex of comic acrobatics and just makes you want to skewer all those Heathcliff and Garfield feline followers with a roti barb. My goodniss.

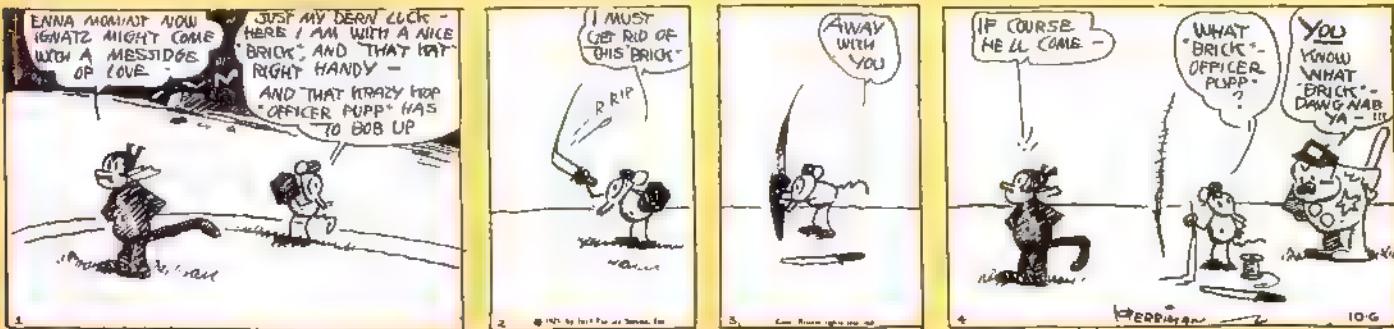
The amazing thing about Herriman is that as he pushed the elements of the comic strip—dialogue, characterization, visual style—to the farthest inventive reaches, he also exposed the clichés of each and addressed them as conventions to be unmashed. Take his use of words. Principal characters Krazy Kat, Ignatz Mouse, Officer B. Pupp, and numerous extras speak in a pixilated pidgin concatenation of Yiddish, black slang, baby talk, other

stuff: "I'm a ten-toed tiger," sings Krazy, drunk on catnip tea. "I'm a polo bear in a skwoil kage—lunda in a tea-pot—wah-wooooooo. Boom Boom—I'm a poiminent tidal wave in a notion of dynamite Pow-WOW." So the guy had fun with words, more so than even S. J. Perelman, but to Herriman words are eventually windblown, nothing. In another strip, Krazy challenges Ignatz's assertion that we have language by which to understand each other, saying that Laplanders can't understand Swedes. "Then, I would say," Krazy announces triumphantly, "language is, that we may mis-unda-stend each udda."

The drawings are the antithesis of the modern grid comic strip: Herriman drew different logos as he felt the need, plotted vertical strips, drew strips patterned like a Navajo rug. Yet here, too, he exposed the conventions as just lines of ink: characters draw each other, and Ignatz pleads to Officer Pupp that his brick isn't real, but simply an artist's rendering of a brick.

Krazy adores Ignatz, longs for the love tap of a brick creasing his bean. Ignatz hates the Kat, and Pupp puts Ignatz in jail out of his unrequited longing for the androgynous Kat. The strip is a classic love triangle, and the miracle is that Herriman never milked it, he never simply turned it out. Until he died, he was drawing jazzy strips that unfolded their mysteries grudgingly, illogically, endlessly. When he passed away in 1944, there was no way Hearst could find somebody to formalize it, and the strip died with him.

—RJ Smith



October 6, 1923



FLASHES

Lip Service: MCA Records, the company that signed Charlie Sexton for an undisclosed but reputedly huge sum, has gone done likewise with his younger brother Will. The infant prodigy will begin recording later this year. Meanwhile, Mrs. Sexton, the only unsigned member of the family, recently—and ominously—moved to LA to be closer to the action.

Usefull! Bob Dylan's brain is currently on sale for \$20, in the form of a computer disk. Titled "The Mind and Lyrics of Bob Dylan," the disk is programmed with the words of his 28 albums and answers relevant questions with quotations from his work. The perpetrator of this modern-day miracle, the Thunderstone Company of Ohio, is next planning to package the minds of Mick Jagger and John Lennon.

Metal Fatigue: Ted Nugent, who recently failed in his \$10 million takeover bid for the Muzak Corporation, reveals that his plan was to update the system "so even baby boomers would get a hard-on." Cynics have read this as the Nuge's last-ditch attempt to get some airplay for his new flop LP, Little Miss Dangerous.

Flag It: Sigue Sigue Sputnik's first LP, *Flaunt It*, will feature between-track advertisements, in spite of reported indifference by American corporations to such a unique opportunity. Ad space on the British version of the LP has now sold out. The band's first British tour, however, has not. It has been postponed in the face of massive public uninterest.

Shanghai Surprise, Mr. and Mrs. Penn's forthcoming film spectacular, drew such a lukewarm response at an early screening in London that it has been returned to the cutting room for a salvage job.

Patti Smith's long-rumored comeback is now official. Having re-signed with Arista Records and re-formed her original band, Patti is currently rehearsing new material in Michigan, site of her clothing boutique.

A Denver-based brokerage house is offering investors an opportunity to buy futures in rock artists' careers. The good news is that if the group is successful, the investment will pay exceptionally high dividends. The bad news is that since investors can't select which group to invest in, it might turn out to be Sigue Sigue Sputnik.

With the recent closings of **Danceteria** and **Irving Plaza** and the planned closing of the **Beacon Theater**, New York is now the worst-served city for live rock music in America. Fortunately, it is still the crack and sushi capital of the world.

Jolt Cola, a new soft drink promising all the sugar and twice the caffeine of other colas, has met with parental outrage and teenage delight in preliminary test marketing. It should become widely available by late 1986. Expect jolt rock to have become the dominant musical trend by the end of '87.

Sean Penn, come back! In a recent confrontation with roving paparazzi, wimp actor Judd Nelson soiled the reputation of the brat pack by calling the police and asking for help.

BOOPS UPSIDE YOUR HEAD

There's no place like Jamaica for taking a good idea and copying, covering, altering, revising, and generally hitting it on the head with a shovel and burying it once and for all—usually within a few weeks.

Last year it was "under mi a leng teng," a phrase that stood for "whatever turns you on." Wayne Smith had the first record using the term, recorded for Prince Jammy over a Casio-composed rhythm track. Within days there were dozens of "a leng teng" songs, computerized ditties that dulled the senses and verified charges that "all that stuff sounds the same."

This year it's the "boops." A boops is a sugar daddy, an easy touch; in its most pejorative meaning, a pimp. In JA these days, times are hard, but music is harder—and everybody's looking for a boops to ease the pressure.

A man named Supercat started the trend with the first released boops song, "See boops dere, him have a bag of money," sang Supercat, meaning that women will do almost anything carnal to relieve a man of his purse. Peter Metro agrees. In his single, "Booppy," he observes that "girl down a yard dem a-cry fe dem man." Perhaps the funniest of the lot is Lovin'deer's "Government Boops," which declares the obvious: "all a we are boops fe government." Even the mystic man, Bunny Wailer, has gotten into the act, with a foot-long 45 called "Old Timer Sing-Ting," in which he observes that "she say she want she boops, see a boops deh, run to hug him up." Sugar Minott commands on his "John Boops" 12-inch: "Call me no boops." And Anthony Red Rose, composer of one of 1985's best shots, "Tempo," says it all in the aptly titled "Me No Want No Boops." "I work hard for my money," chants Rose, and he's not about to drop it on some greedy gal.

By the time this appears, there will probably be another 50 more boops platters, a symptom of the lack of creativity that is becoming the scourge of the music world.

World Beat notes: Jimmy Cliff has been approached by Stevie Winwood to tour with him on a double bill in the US. Cliff was featured with Winwood on the very first Spencer Davis Group single 20 years ago... Burning Spear's forthcoming LP will be called *People of the World* and will feature several remakes of his early Coxsone rockers. His touring band now features a two-tone horn section of three powerful women who joined him at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival and are expected to accompany him to Japan.

—Roger Steffens



John Lurie wishes he had a basketball. "When I'm doing an interview in my apartment, I always bounce one. It gets me into the right rhythm," he says, sitting behind the desk of an unoccupied office at Island Records. In lieu of the round ball, he chain smokes, fidgets incessantly, thumbs through a Jerry Hall pinup calendar and wads up little pieces of paper that he throws at his brother and fellow Lounge Lizard, Evan.

Considering that his career is like a shuttle train between movies, music, and modeling—playing saxophone with the jazzed-out Lounge Lizards, scoring and costarring in *Stranger Than Paradise* and *Down by Law*, posing for a *Rose's lime-juice* ad and any number of fashion spreads in Japanese and European magazines—John's antisness is understandable. He is not the sort of person who falls into one thing and stays with it.

That helps explain why the Lounge Lizards, together since 1979, have gone four years without an album and only just now gotten around to releasing a new one: *Big Heart*, a live LP recorded in Japan. "The band kind of fell apart," Lurie admits, "but we got some new people together and made a living touring Europe and Japan."

You wonder why John puts up with it.

He's made a name for himself in the movies and earned a fair amount of autonomy. Why not sack the Lounge Lizards and go out on his own? "Of course I've considered that," he confesses. "Sometimes I find myself thinking, 'I've been offered fifty grand to spend two weeks being in a movie, so why am I going on tour with this band and making no money?'" But we've been doing the Lounge Lizards for a long time now; it finally seems like the sound is there and the business opportunity appears to be here. So I'm going to give it a final push. Hopefully, there's a spirit of unity in the Lizards that makes it worthwhile."

Playing in the band gives Lurie a sense of control that doesn't come with being in movies. "Music is definitely more pure than filmmaking," he says. "With the new movie, some of my best acting was edited from it. At least I know that if I make a record nobody will cut out the best songs."

Down by Law was produced by Island Pictures, and John has no illusions about why the band was signed to Island Records. "The movie stuff has a lot to do with it," he says. "But if you talk to the other guys in the Lounge Lizards, they'll tell you that we've become more popular because the playing has gotten better." The playing has gotten better. It's tighter, more original,

and the group—regarded in France as the number-one innovative jazz band—has ceased to be a practical joke on jazz buffs.

Not surprisingly, even with his growing success in music and movies John doesn't see the two careers getting in the way of each other. "The music is actually one thing that saved my acting," he says, remembering to mention that he had turned down a guest spot on *Miami Vice*. "It's kept me from turning into Elliot Gould or something. When I'm not working on movies I'm working on the Lounge Lizards, so I'm not out begging for roles. I'm not 'practicing my craft.' The worst actors you see are people who have all this spare time to develop a respect for acting. That can be really dangerous."

John slouches down in his chair and smiles, making a final crack about his two-way lifestyle. "I pretend not to give a fuck about the music because I've got the acting, and I pretend not to give a fuck about the acting because I've got the music. Actually, I've got this third career that nobody knows about..."

—Michael Kaplan

The Lounge Lizards: still the most innovative exponents of le jazz hot

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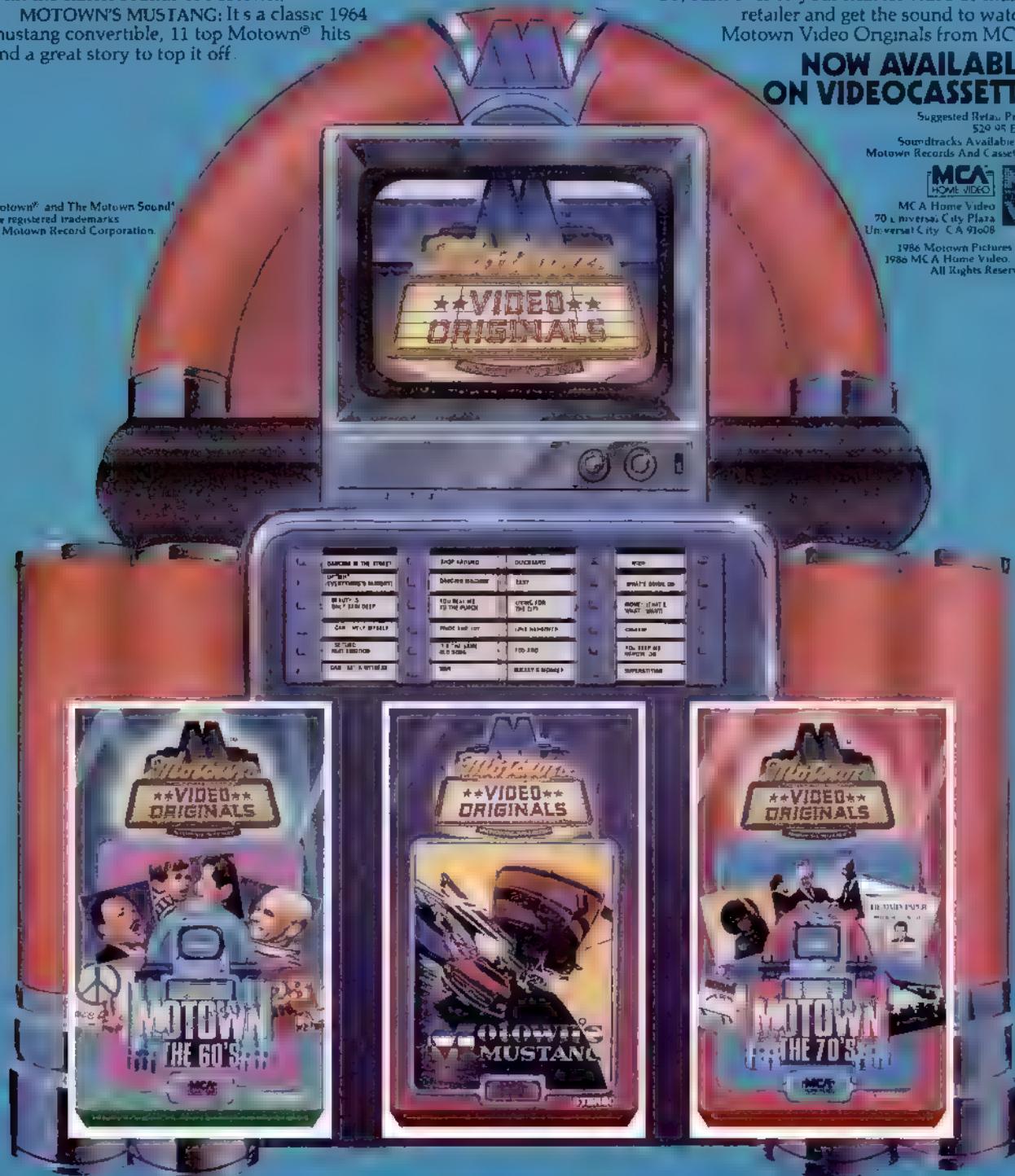
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George W. Bush

"Sometimes you can put together four or five really talented musicians and get a really terrible band. Nothing. And then sometimes you can put together four or five sort of mediocre musicians and get a great band. That's rock 'n' roll."

—Sammy BoDean

The BoDeans are all about the dream eclipsing the reality, the whole much greater than the sum of its parts. At their best, they recall what's best about the last 30 years of American pop—the Everly Brothers, Buddy Holly, the Bobby Fuller Four, Alex Chilton, Bob Dylan. Ultimately, they sound like a stripped-down version of Creedence Clearwater led by Richie Valens. At their worst they sound like the garage band down the block that you'd like to take a garden hose to.

But when they're at their best, there's an x factor that takes over. It's not the songs (though the songs are pretty good), or the playing (though that's also pretty good), and it's certainly not the voices of Sammy (formerly Llana, or Beau BoDean (formerly Kurt Neumann). Sammy has the cranky rasp of mid-'60s Dylan, while Beau has the more laconic voice of the dutiful son who's dead set on going out to raise hell, but who'll wash and dry the dishes before going. They make up with enthusiasm what they lack in range and expression, and each by himself is perfectly listenable. But when they sing together, something happens.

"It seems like when we sing together there's a power there, there's a blast that no amount of instrumental power can duplicate. And that's the coolest part of our stuff, I think. The other night one guy called us a cross between the Everly Brothers and Hall & Oates. He said, 'I don't mean that as a put-down.' It's great if we can sound contemporary and still have that beauty that the Everlys had."

—Beau BoDean

Those two voices become a separate voice in the tradition of great harmonies. It's that sound, two voices making something bigger than themselves, that's at the heart of what's best in their first record, coaxed along by the spare, slightly underfed production of T-Bone Burnett.

THE SOUND AND THE POWER

The BoDeans don't have great voices, great songs, or great talent. But they just might have something more.

Article by
Brian Cullman

Beau: "They [Slash] suggested other people like Lindsay Buckingham and Nile Rodgers, even Tom Waits. But for us, T-Bone was the first choice."

Sammy: "Just on the strength of his own records. They sounded great, and the production was wide open, there wasn't any clutter on it. We figured if we could get some of that on our record we'd be OK."

Beau: "Even with T-Bone, we've always been aware of the sound we wanted, and he was more or less helping us get it. We tried to sample a lot of different styles of writing and a lot of different sounds for this record. But except for 'Fadeaway,' the one thing we really didn't get across that well was a little more modern sound."

Sammy: "I'm afraid we've really been categorized into the roots-rock thing, and I think that's a mistake. We like to approach each song differently, and whatever's best for that song, that's what should go there. That seems to have been the attitude behind the band even before there was a band."

"We started out with our first band, which was called the Strand. I sang, I didn't play guitar, and Beau didn't sing—or at least very little—he just played guitar. That band never happened, and we got tired of auditioning people who were half-assed or didn't have the same vision we had. Because we were very serious about this."

Beau: "People would call us up to audition, and we'd ask, 'We'll, what do you like to play?' And they'd go, 'Well, I can play anything.'"

Sammy: "And that was the wrong answer for us. So we decided that we would just start something of our own. We both knew that we were heading in the same direction. At that point I picked up an acoustic guitar, and Beau started to sing. We figured we better have as many guitars as we could. And that's all we had, the two of us, so we just played a lot. We didn't have jobs at the time, and we weren't really looking for jobs. We were very lucky because our parents were very supportive. We just started writing songs and singing and trying to

Above: Sometimes you can put four sort of mediocre musicians together and get the BoDeans. (L-R) Guy BoDean, Sammy BoDean, Beau BoDean, and Bob BoDean



put an act together by sheer determination and sheer repetition."

Beau: "There was one place we played, one of the only places that would let us play, where we had to come up with four forty-five-to-fifty-minute sets of material. And coming up with all that stuff, with originals and covers, we got to learn a lot of shit."

Sammy: "Our covers were mostly oldies ... we tried to sing some Everly songs, but we could never do that."

Beau: "Yeah, if you can't duplicate that perfectly, don't even touch it."

Sammy: "We did Nancy Sinatra's 'Sugar Town' and 'Little Red Corvette' in a medley with 'Sweet Dreams Are Made of This,' and we did 'Gloria,' 'Time Is on My Side,' a lot of Stones songs, a lot of Marshall Crenshaw songs, a couple of Bruce Springsteen tunes like 'Fire'."

Beau: "It was a long fuckin' night. You'd come in and start playing at the dinner hour, a fish fry..."

Sammy: "And they really didn't expect it ... we rocked as hard then as we do now, except we didn't have a rhythm section. You know, people see two guys up there with just guitars and they expect folk music. On our first poster, that was our slogan: We's ain't no folkies."

Beau: "We went on doing that for about a year, and then we started doing some backup shots at rock clubs behind a couple of bands. That was really interesting because I think people wanted to like us, but there was no bass or drums driving, so they couldn't quite grab it. Then finally, finally, finally, finally, we got the name of a guy, a drummer (Guy Hoffman BoDean), from a mutual friend, and we met him, and he heard our tape, and it turned out real well. It was like vroooooom. It was sound and power, and it was so nice that we just stuck to that. We had the drums and the acoustic and electric (guitars), so we just went out and played like

Sammy BoDean, above: "I'm afraid we've really been categorized into the roots-rock thing, and I think that's a mistake. We like to approach each song differently." Right: The shoes of a decent, hardworking American

"Sometimes you can put together four or five sort of mediocre musicians and get a great band."



Chris Cornell

that for a year."

Sammy: "We had gotten so tight, just between me and Beau, and all of a sudden we had the power of the drums. You know, we never sat down and said, 'Let's try it without a bass player.' But we didn't want to have a bass player just to have a bass player. We waited two years for the right drummer, so we figured we could wait for the right bass player."

Beau: "So I was playing bass and rhythm and lead on electric."

Sammy: "And we just arranged the songs so that there weren't a whole lot of lead breaks."

Beau: "We'd never take lead-guitar breaks, we'd take band lead breaks where we'd rhythmically do a change or something, a chord change, a change in dynamics. It worked out really well. We were just getting a bass player when we started getting record offers, about eight months or so ago. Bob [Griffin, now BoDean] went to the same high school as us. He was a couple of years ahead of us, and he had been playing in a power-pop band, and he just got tired of that and started coming to see us and saw a lot of room for what he could do."

Sammy: "It was really easy for us because we had known him, he was a friend of ours already. It was rough on him, because he had to learn a lot of material in a very short time."

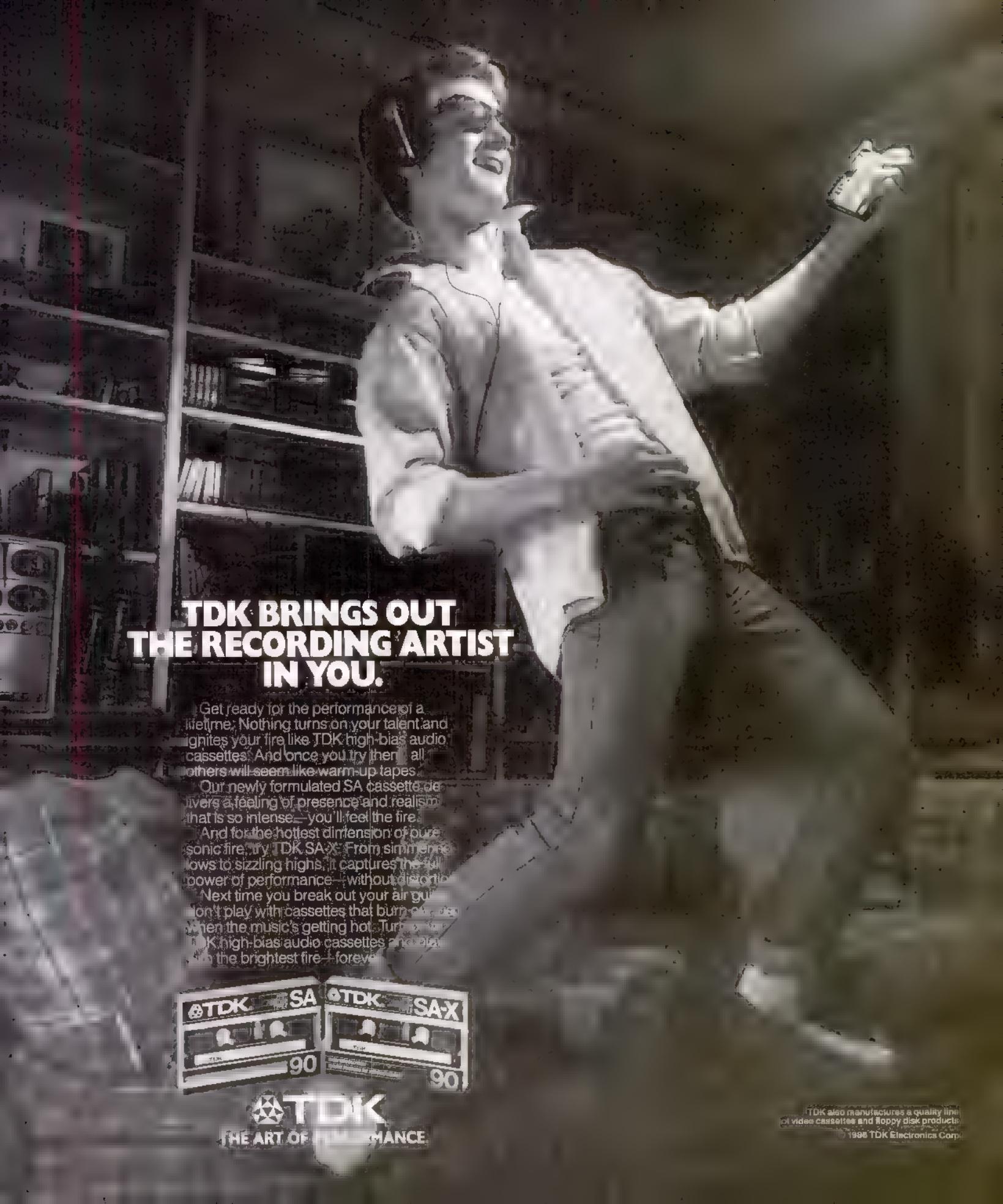
Beau: "It was funny, because one of the first shows we did, we played one set without a bass player, and then in the second set he came on. It was fun. But he had to learn three sets of material; where we come from, you have to know at least three 50-minute sets to play the clubs."

Strangely enough, for a band that cut its teeth on all-night sets and cover tunes, cover songs are now the weakest part of their live set. The choices are semi-inspired ("California Sun," Neil Diamond's "I Thank the Lord for the Night Time"), but the versions are respectful and reveal far less about the BoDeans' love for '60s and '70s pop than do their original songs. These they toss off with an energy and verve bordering on the fanatic, with many songs' roots barely disguised. You can hear Richie Valens's "Come On, Let's Go" in "Angels"; Bruce Springsteen's "Tenth Avenue Freeze Out" lurks behind "Say You Will"; and Chuck Berry rears his ubiquitous head amongst a batch of new and as yet unrecorded tunes. This in no way diminishes their power. If anything, it adds to it, placing them in the fine and time-honored tradition of finding the best and the tallest shoulders to stand on and then jumping up and down

Sammy: "Before we had our band, we went to see a lot of bands around Milwaukee, and the thing that was lacking in most of them was fun. They were onstage and there was a real distance between the band and the crowd. So we come on, and we try to bridge that gap and say we're all in this together. Nothing matters except forgetting everything and having fun."

Beau: "The band is only as good as the crowd that's there, when you have a ton of people there, then it becomes one big party, and that's what we always felt rock 'n' roll was about. You know, screw everything, screw your problems and just rock for the night. That's what we started doing from the beginning when we got hooked on it."

The BoDeans cut a demo last year that landed them their record deal with Slash. There's a great little rocker on it called "Be My Girl." In the middle of the last chorus ("Say you're gonna be my girl/You're gonna be my girl/You're gonna be my baby") Sammy and Beau lose themselves and start singing, "Say, I'm gonna be my girl." It's a wonderful moment. It made me realize that I hadn't been listening to the words and neither had they. They were miles away, lost inside the music, playing. 



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GOODNIGHT, DEMOCRACY

Sure, the Dead Kennedys are offensive, but obscene? It must be Jello, because jam don't shock like that.

Article by Chuck Eddy

Last December, I received a promotional copy of the Dead Kennedys' *Frankenchrist* album in the mail and found inscribed on the sleeve a poster that initially looked like a bunch of beansprouts poking out from between kidney beans. I looked a little closer, saw something entirely different, and became thoroughly disgusted. Figuring the poster was a cretinous shock tactic not unlike most of the Kennedys' patently obvious quasi-political generic hardcore, I tucked the sheet containing a bed of erect penises back in the album sleeve, sheathed the half-played disc, sold it to a used-record store next chance I got, and didn't think anything else of it.

A short time later, Mary Sierra of Sylmar, California, saw the poster when her 14-year-old daughter purchased *Frankenchrist* as a birthday present for her 11-year-old son. She sent the poster, along with an angry letter of complaint, to the State Attorney General's office, objecting to her kids' being exposed to such smut. Her complaint and the poster were forwarded to the Los Angeles city attorney's office. In April, plainclothes police searched Kennedys singer Jello Biafra's San Francisco apartment and Alternative Tentacles Records' Frisco office, and charged Biafra (along with the record label's general manager, two distributors, and the company that put together the album-poster package) with "distribution or exhibition of harmful material to minors," an offense regulated by California Penal Code 313.1. The case (at press time awaiting a July 30 arraignment date) could set an important precedent, with a scope far exceeding its likely effect on terminally lame, stunted-in-1981 punk-rock bands.

The penal code defines "harmful" material as whatever the average adult Californian perceives as appealing to his prurient interests and finds both patently offensive and utterly without redeeming social value for juveniles. Biafra doesn't deny that the poster, an H.R. Giger painting, "Penis Landscape," with its optically illuding panorama of male members, is offensive—in fact, a sarcastic warning sticker Biafra included on the album's shrink wrap suggests it is. But he says "only a sicko would be turned on pruriently by the poster. It has literary, scientific, political, and artistic value."

This makes sense, for the painting from which the poster is derived is on display in a collection in Europe and is reproduced in certain art-history texts.

"The poster amplifies the effect of what the album is saying about consumer-oriented society," says the head Kennedy. "It's the greatest metaphor I've ever seen for consumer culture on parade."

That's arguable, of course. The greatest metaphor I've ever seen for consumer culture on parade is the flocks of bald kids wearing Dead Kennedys T-shirts at Scratch Acid and Celtic Frost and Eisfürzende Neubauten shows screaming "Play hardcore!!" at the bands and pretending they're participating in some kind of wild vanguard counterculture, when really they're just as conformist and closed-minded as suppressed ol' mum and pop back home.

The DKs were once—a long time ago—marginally relevant band. But *Frankenchrist* is the safest, most guiltless record I have ever heard referred to as "alternative music." Given the choice, I'd take Journey's "Be Good to Yourself"/"Only the Young" 45 without a second thought. And I like hardcore.

But even fools have certain rights. If the First Amendment to the Constitution was taken at face value, cases like this would never come to fruition. The amendment says, "Congress shall make no law abridging the freedom of speech or of the press," and as Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black wrote in his opinion on the landmark *Roth v. United States* obscenity trial in 1957, "I read 'no law abridging' to mean 'no law abridging.'"

The amendment, of course, is rarely provided an exact interpretation; historically, obscenity and libel have been denied its full protection. "Obscenity," however the term is defined at a given moment (and the definition always changes), has been considered awful a ternately because it's thought to be bad in itself ("immoral"), or to cause bad things to happen ("harmful"). Forget that there is no evidence to suggest that obscenity or pornography, assuming such creatures actually exist, cause humans (including children) to harm other humans. "The Supreme Court has said again and again that it is 'reasonable to assume' obscenity interferes with the quality of life," L.A. Deputy City Attorney Michael Guarino explains. "It is not necessary to prove that a harmful act actually resulted; the assumption [that such an act might occur] is legitimized by court rulings."

Following the craven concessions major record companies have recently made to PMRC demands, an independent-label figurehead such as Biafra would appear to be the perfect PMRC target. He has

been highly visible, even outside the punk community, ever since his fourth-place finish in the 1981 San Francisco mayoral race; he's been a favorite whipping-boy of moral-majority anti-rock forces in the past; his band's name strikes a sensitive chord in our national psyche, and his lyrics do rally against the status quo.

The impending trial has already put a damper on future Dead Kennedys releases. Biafra calls the lawsuit "a tremendous tax on my time," and says the case (which could result in a \$2,000 fine and one-year prison term if Jello is convicted) will probably cost the defense at least \$20,000 regardless of its outcome. (Contributions to help cover Alternative Tentacles' legal expenses can be forwarded to the No More Censorship Fund, POB 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101.) Carrying on Alternative Tentacles' business affairs has been next to impossible, since company ledgers (along with some albums, personal letters to Biafra, and copies of the tanzine *Maximum Rock'n'Roll*) were confiscated during the initial search and seizure. So the Kennedys' next album, titled *Bedtime for Democracy* even before all this began, has been postponed indefinitely.

More significant is the effect the trial could have on the rest of the music world, especially tiny indie-label bands with far less notoriety and financial resources than the DKs. For many, the risk of an obscenity charge will doubtless be too great a chance to take; some will resort to the pabulum the PMRC wants all music to be, and others may well pack it in. And repercussions could be felt in other directions as well. "They are using our case as a precedent for much bigger fish," Biafra says. "Everyone from *Maximum Rock'n'Roll* to *Penthouse* to Madonna is going to be in trouble if we are convicted in this case." In the words of Spinoza, "Suppression is paring down the state till it is too small to harbor men of talent."

Michael Guarino, naturally, denies he has any such despicable intentions. In a manner of speaking, he's just doing his job, and anyway it's the poster that's on trial here, not the music. He's been quoted as saying the trial is "a cost-effective way of sending a message out," but what message?

Laws that do not concretely prevent people from being harmed (not "offended") by other people should not be laws, no matter what the confused Supreme Court says.

DAVID LEE ROTH

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SPINS

Eurythmics,
Cowboy Mouth,
Die Kreuzen,
Steve Earle,
Schoolly-D,
Pete Shelley, Misfits,
Pagans, Slayer,
Big Country

Edited by Glenn
O'Brien and Sue
Cummings

Platter du Jour

Eurythmics
Revenge
RCA



Foto: Martin London, Features

When Eurythmics first appeared I didn't like them. I thought that Eurythmics meant European rhythms. Sort of like the Eurogliders. I really didn't like them. Of course, the Eurythmics singles that I had heard on the radio were really good—catchy, toe tapping, and all. But I was suspicious of Annie Lennox's hair, especially when she was wearing sideburns. And I heard that she was married to a Hare Krishna. I was prejudiced.

Two years ago at the New Music Seminar, the artists on the artists panel were all asked what new acts they liked. George Clinton beamed a big smile and said, "I like Eurythmics." I thought he was kidding. But then it started to bother me as I continued to like all those singles. I guess I finally realized that George wasn't kidding when I started to really like Eurythmics, because everything they played sounded good. Sooner or later I realized that Eurythmics had nothing to do with Europe. It was like euphemism or eulogy or euphoria or euthanasia. As a Scrabble player I should have known all along that "eurythmics" means the choreographic art of interpreting musical composition by a rhythmic, freestyle, graceful movement of the body in response to the rhythm of music. In other words, good rhythm.

And then when I finally saw how gorgeous Annie looked in the film *Revolution*—well, case closed.

I love Eurythmics and I am forcing all my friends to love them, too. All that requires is making sure that they hear the new album.

Revenge starts off like a Canned Heat album, dissolving from black into an abstract blues etched with acid: an orchestral swell like a red tide, blues harp coming up like a discolored sun. Then the song kicks in, a big-beat, power-tooled, blues-manifesto stomp called "Missionary," about original sin, good and evil, and the various moral interpretations of down by law.

A little Junior Wells, a little William Blake, and a lot of Annie Lennox testimony-monky. Gooseflesh chill.

"Thorn in My Side" is a song in the great classically educated female confessional tradition. Annie confesses the blues and her mistakes. She knows she was wrong because he was all wrong, and she knew he was wrong but she acted as if it was all right, but it was all wrong. Like many great songs of rejection and spurning and fuck off, this is catchy and romantic and attractive. It's also Annie's most Blondie-like song yet, and she doesn't do many, despite having Clem Burke sitting at the kit. But God knows we've been hurting for good get-lost songs since Debbie's hiatus.

The Eurythmics are like Blondie in their gift for sublime songs of epiphany pop art. Like "The Last Time." It's a beatific infection. It gets to you. You dance and you learn something about yourself if you got your ears on. "Who will you go to when there's no one to betray . . . ?" Bang zoom.

It's hard to get away with a song called "The Miracle of Love." But Annie and Dave and company put up rather than shut up, creating a miraculous love song that is heavenly, seductive, sweeping, anodynamic, and straightforwardly, blatantly healing. "The miracle of love will take away your pain when the miracle of love comes your way again." I almost feel better already.

Speaking of snazzy titles, how about "Take Your Pain Away"? But again they deliver the goods like the Federal Expressway to your heart. I'm feeling better already. Wow, that's pretty. Let's play it again.

"Let's Go" is sort of the Eurythmics signature sound. It's got a lot of body. Here's another song about falling in love and it makes you want to if you're not already, and if you are it makes you want to get up and do it all over again. Oooh, that woman can sing. I'd like to take

Whitney Houston to lunch, but if I could have a woman singing outside my window, I'd take this dame. Ouch. And this guy Dave, well, he knows how to put those chords together with all those cords and make you feel that this dub's for you.

"A Little of You" is already an all-time classic. A real Aretha type of tune, where Annie gives you a chill and lifts you up. It's formal but transcendent. Like Burt Bacharach or Gustave Moreau.

"In This Town" is another tour de force of attitudinal beauty. I like most songs that involve "stopping the rain," but this has got to be up in the top two of the genre. In fact, this is one of the very best "this town" songs of all time, too. The fantastic (or is it fanatic?) harmony here gives you a feeling of solidarity that makes you think you could change the whole town, like maybe with the right kind of party or club or auto paint job.

"I Remember" is another smash healing hit. It's about how sometimes when you're real young, you don't know what you're doing, and although knowing it later won't change things, it's a good excuse. It's about seeing the beauty in a good overview. I never believed that "everything is beautiful in its own way," but I'll go along with this gorgeous song to the effect that everything can be beautifully interpreted.

Too hip for Eurythmics? No such thing, homey. They're nonpareil, they got that je ne sais quoi, and they're practically giving it all away. They're the best and this is one of the greatest record albums, not only of all time, but of this summer as we know it.

—Glenn O'Brien

Above: Annie Lennox and Dave Stewart of Eurythmics. Their new record—bang zoom



Steve Earle
Guitar Town
MCA

AMERICA. Mom, Baseball, Apple pie. Cross commercialism. Imperialist foreign intervention. Steve Earle's first album *Guitar Town* is a lot like Reagan's America. If you are willing to suspend your disbelief and just groove on it, it's great, but if a touch—a mere pinch—of cynicism intrudes, you are done for.

Earle's music is part of the country resurgence epitomized by such bands as the BoDeans, Lone Justice, and Dwight Yoakam. With the pedal steel guitar mixed way down, and the Telecaster leads cranked up, this record distances itself from country yet fails to achieve real rock 'n' roll energy. *Guitar Town* attempts a compromise between country and rock, and ends up doing neither particularly well.

The first few times I heard this disc I couldn't decide what to say about it. It did have a certain charm, but somehow it just didn't stand up on its own. When I thought of this record I realized I was actually singing Dwight Yoakam songs. If I want to sing Yoakam, I'll listen to Dwight Yoakam.

Earle's voice has a real twang to it, so real that it is hard to believe. The songs are about such down-home topics as pickup trucks, love, and lost love, among other clichés. With lyrics like "My granddaddy was a miner, but he finally saw the light/He didn't have much, just a beat-up truck and a dream about a better life," it's not surprising that John Cougar Mellencamp and Bruce Springsteen dig him (Mellencamp covers Earle's "Someday" in concert). Unlike the natives who inhabit the worlds of Mellencamp and Springsteen, Earle's subjects seem more like American tourists. These songs do not give an intriguing glimpse into believable character's lives. They merely restate old themes. In "Little Rock 'n' Roll," Earle's on the road again: "No, little guy, your daddy won't be home for a while/it's gonna be another couple weeks and another couple thousand miles."

Yup. If you buy the Reagan myth of the salt-of-the-earth heartland working man, or, better yet, Le Boss's jaded version, you might buy this. In the spirit of the age, just close your eyes and smile blissfully. Despite all, I do like this record; it's just that the harder I listen the more skeptical I get. The music is fine, it's the words that get you down. Bleeding-heart I berate who want content with their form need not apply.

—Chris Carroll



Alan Messer



Pete Shelley
Heaven and the Sea
Polygram

P.S.K., we're makin' that green
People always say, "What the hell does
that mean?"
Kids killin' kids in Baltimore
Schoolly-D makin' records that be illin'
Tipper Gore
All the b-boys like him 'cause he's so
obscene
So I put it on my box by the coffee

machine

His beats are dusted and his reverb's fresh
I turn the volume up loud to hear it back
at my desk
Then the freaks in the house that are
workin' at SPIN
Think the record's so def they turn the
volume to 10
He's rockin' everybody 'cause you know
that he can CAN CAN CAN CAN
Shockin' everybody, he's a hell of a man
MAN MAN-MAN-MAN
So now I'm always in your face sayin'
Schooly School, man
All your rhymes ain't so coolly cool, man
You never ever should be such a fool
To glorify a murder like a fascist tool
One, Two, One, two, three, four,
W-O-R-K-I-N-G
The boss stopped the party and he fired
me
So if you're first name's Schooly and your
last name's D
Do your next rap on the economy
Get off that tip, admit you need some
green
Us suckers won't say, "What the hell does
that mean?"

Sue Cummings



Pete Shelley
Heaven and the Sea
Polygram

There's been somewhat of a knock on Pete Shelley lately. The rap against the late '70s heavyweight hit champion was that his pen had dried up and was in need of re-inking. Seven years ago, Shelley and the Buzzcocks poured out one of the most tumultuous, ambitious, devastating, and utterly climactic sides of music we've seen in the past 10 years, namely the second half of *A Different Kind of Tension*, a side fittingly subtitled "The Thorn Beneath the Rose." Since then what? Three OK Buzzcocks 45s, whose mild success was dimmed by the band's bitter end, followed by a good—if ragtag—popular discoified solo debut, *Homosapien* (1981). That record had a number of strong tracks like the title cut, but Shelley admitted on local radio that the bulk of *Homosapien* was culled from his earliest efforts as a songwriter. The last outing, *X.L.* (1983) was a halfhearted, useless throwaway; the record was a flop and Pete lost his deal with Arista. Fortunately, *Heaven and the Sea* sounds like lost time made up. The man of wit and manners has regained his gift for instant hooks, and he has gone back to sing-a-long pop songs with intelligent arrangements. Though *Heaven and the Sea* still leans too heavily on the monotonous drum machine dance beat, its bright, dramatically lush sound and happy melodies add new character to its author's legendary contemplative nostalgia and his plaintive search for that lover of his dreams. In particular, the latest single, "On Your Own," is a low, driving "Fast Car" to the stomach, hypnotically steered by a big booming bass. The mood of songs like "I Surrender" and "You Can't Take That Away From Me" suggests the kind of singing, windswept romanticism last explored by Echo and the Bunnymen's *Ocean Rain* or Siouxsie and the Banshees' *Kaleidoscope*, but aimed more at dance-club boogiers than college radio.

In general, one could regard *Heaven and the Sea* as Shelley's first real solo LP, a fresh new start on a new label, a more complete sound, and hit-oriented singles. Though it probably won't regain many long departed Buzzcocks fans, the LP is a solid bid for the dance-rock crowd, and it's a very pleasant listen, too. Welcome back, Pete ol' boy.

—JACK RABID

Above: A true American, Steve Earle



Pagans
Burned Alive
Treehouse



Misfits
Legacy of Brutality
Plan 9



One of the sins of our age is that most of the finest punk rock is buried far out of sight. Locked in the closets of collector scum, classic recordings languish in anal-retentive obscurity. Indeed, two of the best bands of the '70s have been known almost exclusively to collectors. But with the release of these albums, it's possible to enjoy some monstrous works no matter how measly your budget.

The Pagans were the first band from the Devo Belt to realize the fact that thud, blast, and howl were the building blocks of modern culture. While other mammy-slapping pukes were assembling Heathkit synths in their rumpus rooms, the Pagans drank beer, peed blood, and spewed fire onto four singles. From '77 up till their nihilist-bubblepunk swan song, "Dead End America" in '79, the Pagans were the

face of Midwest punk. Hard metal guitar paid strict attention to melody even while trashing standards like the Who's "Can't Explain"; vocals emanated from a throat so snarled that even a sissy-pop ballad sneered as if it were a Lee Ving French tickler, rhythms hit with ball-crushing ferocity, then rose up into tooth-wiggling gouts of pure, raw tunage like "What's This Shit Called Love?" *Buried Alive* flashes the mean, lean tilt that provided土壤 for the next wave of young Midwestern turds, and it's a solid rock

The Misfits' *Legacy of Brutality* is cut from the same vein of granite. Made up largely of tracks recorded for a projected LP in '78, this is the sound of the East Coast's finest before hardcore took over and "Speed Before All" became their credo. On it, Glenn Danzig's great cartoon-horror lyrics are clearly audible, and the massive guitar riffs that crash through the blood-soaked landscape can be fully observed before they go flying off to sow chaos elsewhere. Danzig's sustained wail was meant to be heard at this pace and people only familiar with the band's line—but too sweet—alter work oughta have their heads taken cleanly off by the revelations contained herein.

Fuck collectors. This stuff shoulda always belonged to anybody w/ a taste for brain-crush. Now it does. Hooray for you

By Brian Conley

Above: The late great Pagans L-R: Brian Tim, Tommy, and Mike. In: 99

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COWBOY MOUTH



Cowboy Mouth

Cowboys and Indians
Throbbing Lobster

When kids show smiles like this one on the cover of *Cowboys and Indians*, they're really just baring their teeth to oblige an elder. Ten is not old enough for singer/songwriter Dave Laredo to worry that his mouth is the landscape of an orthodontist's nightmare or to know that his "say cheese" smile isn't the same as the one he'd offer naturally. It's not old enough to know that he'll grow up to make a record that might be the best indie pop debut of 1986.

It's probably old enough to know that pop runs in the family: David's real last name is Lichtenstein, son of Roy the painter. *Cowboys and Indians* is a playful, vivid rendering of midwestern childhood. While it's not as indulgent as some autobiographies, a few favorite fantasies emerge intact. In "Mr. Wilson," Laredo is Dennis the Menace, whining "I'm tired of playing with kids my own age." In "Livin'

off the Land" he is a farmer, in "Ki Yi Yea" an Indian, in "My Brown Girl" an outlaw escaping on horseback. "Hurricane" leaves the most memorable impression, scattered recollections framed by a reedy synth solo that wanders into the theme from *Peter and the Wolf*, a kindergarten standard. Likewise, "Long Hot Ride" builds a riff around the first part of the theme from *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*.

Most of the tracks on *Cowboys and Indians* were done for a demo, recorded live, costing only a few thousand dollars. Laredo says that "Hurricane's" solo descended spontaneously to the *Peter and the Wolf* theme. So when you hear him sing along with the keyboard, you're witnessing serendipity that high-budget productions rarely offer.

The old, low-tech, monophonic Roland synth is a trademark of this band's simplistic sound, with enough character flaws to qualify it as a fifth member. They've tried to replace it because it sometimes plays out of tune with itself, but nothing suits Laredo's nasal twang better.

Maybe the most surprising thing about Cowboy Mouth is that they're from New York City, lately the stomping ground of some dangerous, stifling pretension. Excluding rap and jazz, white bread pop is suffering from arrested development here. But Cowboy Mouth are not painting again, cleaning their brains. They don't have to prove they're creative at our expense. They celebrate simple pleasures. A meaty rhythm section, guitar hooks that deliver, vocals that achieve humanity in a hiccup.

Cowboys and Indians is modest and

garage-y enough to satisfy college radio specifications. But amidst new sincerity's anti-heroes (you don't need their names) and the legions of cowpunks fixated on hokey westernisms, Cowboy Mouth aren't pretending to be something they ask you to take seriously. Instead, they're serious about asking you to pretend. *Cowboys and Indians* proves imagination and exuberance are more rewarding than austerity. It's greasy kid stuff for children of all ages.

—Sue Cummings



Die Kreuzen

October File
Touch and Go

Two things amaze me. The first is that the speed-metal hard-core groups who do the most to sound exactly like everybody else enjoy the biggest slice of the genre's enormous new popularity. (New York's largest, greediest club gives its Saturday

nights to a group of largely below-drinking-age punks; at a recent show by rote formalists Agnostic Front, you couldn't have fit a sheet of paper between any two of 'em.) The second thing is the way nostalgic Anglophilia still obtains in the Midwest. Spotting the late '70s English artpunk influences on middle-America groups like Big Black (Killing Joke, Gang of Four, Pop Group), Naked Raygun (Buzzcocks), and Killokozer (The Fall) is like circling the hidden objects in a *Highlights for Children* drawing. Sometimes the objects themselves are more interesting than the whole drawing.

Die Kreuzen, a four-piece from Milwaukee, plays loud, aggressive music with flourishes of metallic guitar and occasional blinding tempos, but doesn't fit in with the speed-metal scene. Good speed-metal groups light all your bulbs at once with an ejaculatory burst of sound that's too big to take in, too dense to pull apart. Die Kreuzen's music is introverted and recognizably discrete. It's like a hole in a constant state of collapse, and its thrust comes from each of the musicians hammering in from the outside. Because of this difference, while everybody else is getting rich or at least paid, Die Kreuzen has a shitty little audience and probably can't afford soundproofing for its basement.

The hole that *October File*, Die Kreuzen's second and slowest album, tries to cave in on is singer (well, not really singer, maybe designated screamer is more like it) Dan Kubinski's throat. This is a deep hole, its walls lined with spikes and garbage. At the bottom, someone is slowly feeding the vocal chords' dick into a food processor. Kubinski's voice is the aural equivalent of dragon's breath. *October File* is an inarticulate, agonized howl from a distant abyss, bringing suffering and anger cut off from their causes. Around this guttural anguish, guitarist Brian Egeness beats chunky off-center riffs against weary, almost ironic three-second noodlings, and drummer Erik Turison and bassist Keith Brammer grind asymmetrical rhythms through changes that defy foot tapping or even fist clenching. Die Kreuzen changes time signatures like most people change their underwear: often and gracelessly. You're just grateful if they leave you standing upright when they get to the other side. Musically, they avoid clichés and undermine their own tropisms with such intensity that even songs with titles like "Uncontrolled Passion" and "Among the Ruins" don't sound corny.

With its primitivist experimentalism, this amazing punk artifact may be the best Wire record since *Chairs Missing*. It's as if Wire went Metallica instead of art swill. You've heard Kubinski's screech late at night when you feel bad but don't know why. Die Kreuzen doesn't try to explain or exorcise the pain. *October File* is more radical than that. It accepts it. What balls.

—John Leland

Above: Die Kreuzen is (L-R) Erik Turison, Brian Egeness, Dan Kubinski, and Keith Brammer. You've heard this when you feel bad and don't know why.

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IMPORTS At Home Abroad

Be sure not to spill your HEINEKEN IMPORTED BEER as you reel and jig around the room to *Le Fiddle Irlandais*, by **Ted Furey**. Why traditional Irish music is coming out of France is anyone's guess, but these tunes sure are sweet to listen to. This is where the ever-so-trendy Pogues picked up their licks. American rock 'n' roll ears might have a wee bit o' trouble adjusting to the sound of two fiddles and an acoustic guitar, but after a few tracks, these two-minute gems sound just fine.

"A fanzine, then a record, then a label" is how England's **Audio Visual Abstract**



Magazine from England describes itself. It is a slick package, but the record buried inside is worth the effort it takes to dig through the accessories. At times dark and moody, at others pure pop, and at still others jazzy, the 10 groups on this disc produce 10 entirely different moods. If you don't like one song, you'll probably like the next. Despite the variety, everything manages to stick together somehow. And with song titles like "Gravespit," "Muscoviet Mosquito," and "Smurf in the Gulag," you can't lose.

American in Paris (well, actually in Lidingo, Sweden) **Richard Lloyd** (formerly of *Television*) rocks out on *Field of Fire*. Inexplicably, Lloyd's music is not available on a domestic label. Sometimes it takes a foreign perspective to recognize an American original. Good straightforward rock.

Famed percussionist **Airto Moreira** explores Latin American musical tradition, adds a little pop and jazz spice, and comes up with a sound all his own on *Aqui Se Puede*.

—Chris Carroll



ADVERTISEMENT



Big Country

The Seer
Mercury

During the past 10 years or so, some of the world's greatest scientific minds spent countless man-hours in some of the world's best-equipped research labs in an effort to come up with a microchip capable of imitating any noise audible to the human ear. This wizardry has given us keyboards that sound like strings, drums that sound like oboes, and guitars that sound like trumpets. And some say there is no progress.

The brave young Scotsmen of Big Country have responded to the challenge of this new technology by attempting to simulate the sound of bagpipes using only their electric guitars, their bare hands, and their God-given talent. And some say there are no more heroes.

Heroism, of both the electric guitar and the acoustic human varieties, is a major concern for the members of Big Country, as well it should be in these troubled times. *The Seer* is filled with soulful champions who ride out of the Scottish mists to fight battles both military and metaphorical to the sound of electric guitars baying bagpipe-like in the background. These intense Scots survey the desolation of the modern world while muttering things like, "I must leave this land," "I will be strong," and "All this will pass." Through it all, the guitar/pipes play on. These dour knights go on mystic quests for the meaning of "all history." And the pipes play on. They endure periods of brutal testing and prayerfully await "the time for peace." And still with the damned bagpipes.

These songs, mostly written by singer-guitarist Stuart Adamson, are not uplifting, not exactly depressing. They're stoic and resolute, filled with troubled good faith and anxious good will. You can't

Above: Stuart Adamson of Big Country. The band's new album combines Scottish gloom and stoic heroism with guitars that sound—surprise!—like bagpipes. And some say there is no God

dance to them. You'd be hard pressed to sing along. You may be tempted to try an air-guitar/bagpipe solo.

God knows Celtic mysticism can be rich ground, but Adamson is not a mystic, and he has no lyrical grip on the ineffable Scotch gloom he strains to evoke. On one tune, he adopts the voice of a particularly smug philosophy major and moans, "I want everything laid out for me." Van Morrison went looking for *The Truth* and the answer that resonated in his Celt's soul was "just to dig it all and not wonder."

Of another Celtic soul brother, W.B. Yeats, it was said, "Mad Ireland hurt him into poetry." Make that Scotland, and you've got the picture of Adamson that is the man's stock in trade. The line, however, between suffering artists and whiny jerks is very thin, and Big Country do not cross it. For all the bagpipes, immaculate production, and handsome liner photos this band still sounds like guys you wouldn't want to have a drink with. And some say there is no justice.

—Peter Carbonara

Slayer

Reign in Blood
Def Jam

If there is a God, why did he create Slayer? Does God like metal? Does God want kids from Southern California to sing songs about decapitation? OK, so maybe God did not create Slayer. Maybe the Devil created Slayer. Then if so, how did he do it? In the old-fashioned *Rosemary's Baby* style or the modern Linda Blair method? Did he possess their minds first and then make them want to learn guitar, bass, and drums? Or did they already know how to play and then he did his trip?

Theology aside, we have to face the facts—Slayer exists. Along with Metallica and Megadeth, Slayer is one of the black knights of neo-American thrash, creators of a calculated, scientific, and chilling metal landscape that rushes up at you so dramatically you want either to grab for the barf bag or put on a straitjacket. This is not castrato vocals, zucchini codpieces, and wandering guitar solos. This is Hell, dudes!

Reign in Blood is Slayer's third LP, their first on Def Jam, formerly a label for rappers only. Coproduced by Rick Rubin, the album was mixed for the blaster, not the radio. Guitar solos by Kerry King and Jeff Hanneman ejaculate out of the mix with wild clarity while their glittering string duets are precariously perched atop the futuristic rhythm freight train of Tom Araya's bass and Dave Lombardo's drums.

Araya's high-speed, monotonic vocal diatribes convulsively track the rhythm section in the mutant So-Cal vocal style sired by *Slam* dancing and head banging and popularized by *Suicidal Tendencies*. Lyrically, this is the stuff that the PMRC couldn't handle, an album that starts with the words "Auschwitz, the meaning of pain," ends with "reign in blood," and in between presents an Evelyn Wood speed-listening course in satanism, death, and hell. But for sheer numbness of purpose, nothing beats "Angel of Death," Slayer's commentary on Nazi Joseph Mengele. Mengele was a "sadist of the nobest blood" who "toiled to benefit the Aryan race" by performing "surgery without anesthesia." Jeez, if you ever wondered what effect *Hogan's Heroes* had on our culture, this is it—a view of the Holocaust as gothic comic-book drama, as removed from reality as the Black Plague or Darth Vader. I mean, free speech is great, but who's going to clean up all that fake blood?

Yeah, it's all high-speed purgatory where Slayer come from and the only exit is "Piece by Piece." So if you're fascinated by state-of-the-art metal psychodrama and "evil" lyrics, then hop on the fuel-injected Slayermobile. We're all going to hell, and with Slayer it's a megaspeed descent.

—Rich Sum



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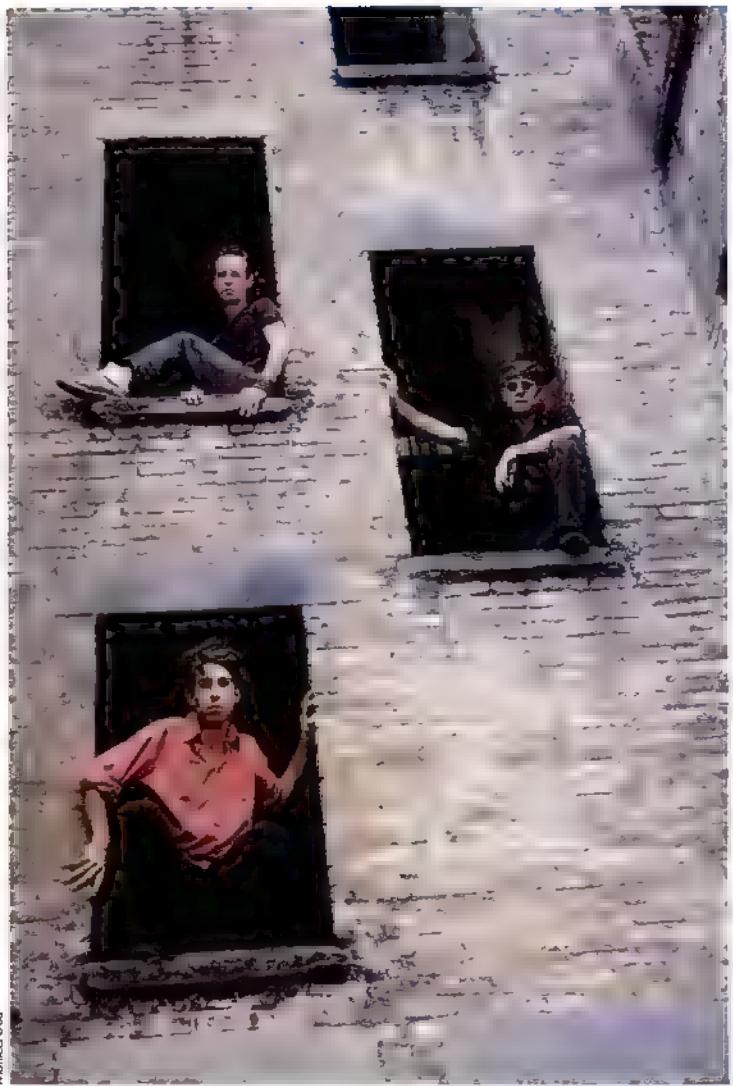
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UNDERGROUND

Column by Andrea Enthal

We reject them. They reject us. Who you reject defines your movement. Who is it hip to reject today? In mid-1986 there's no predominant American rock movement, just a collection of increasingly fragmented sects within sects, all busy rejecting each other with righteous zeal. Then there are the bands who aren't part of any movement. They are the leading edge of the underground.



Monica Dede

Imagine a million glistening snails in a hundred thousand frying pans all letting out a scream. It would be soft and scratchy, high-pitched, and full of mortal desperation—just like the opening six seconds of **Dr. Bombay's** "Bound and Gagged." Add a snarling, nyarling, and screeching guitar that would be at home in a docudrama about Vietnam. Stir in a European ambulance siren and twist in fuzzy metallic sludge puddles of '60s-inspired noise. Lastly, add a vocalist to whoop and screech as if the devil were jabbing a pitchfork into his rump. You'll then have an idea of the sound made by Dr. Bombay on their Spastic Plastic label 7-inch. The band's name comes from the flaky, eternally vacationing witch doctor in the '60s TV series *Bewitched*. Their appeal comes from their big, bashing drumbeat. It's simple and hollow, uncluttered by luscious echoes or subtle recording techniques. It tramps and trots like it came from a striptease parlor. While lines like "You've been bound and gagged" followed by "Oh well, what a drag, you keep begging for the knife" make it sound superficially like a glorification of rape, the real bondage is mental, not physical. It's the story of a bored and desperate housewife who dreamed of marrying Prince Charming but ended up with a lout. Like most of the records in this column, Dr. Bombay's single isn't widely distributed. You can get a copy by writing to the band at 611 Cedar Ave., Collingswood, NJ 08108.

Somewhere between no wave and no way fall the harshly swirling guitar pulses and burbles of **Grong Grong**, a great and grating post-Birthday Party quartet from the land of the Goolagongs. Grong's sound screeches and shimmers smoothly in vibrato-drowned squiggles. Vocalist Michael Farkas barely sings; instead, he glugs lyrics over tortured saxophone moans and harsh, hard guitar repetitions. The band claims the name comes from a village in the Aussie outback, but anyone listening to their debut American LP, *Grong Grong*, will see that their name is their sound. Song titles that include "Vlad the Impaler," "Club Grotesque," and "Louie the Fly" only hint at the dark, heavy, and twisted minds behind this flat black slab. The first side of the album contains four studio recordings; the flipside is a sampling of the band live, a muddy, off-mike disaster that mutes their sparkle and drains their energy. You can save your own energy by leaving side one on terminal replay. *Grong Grong* greet America courtesy of Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 11458, San Francisco, CA 94101

Every year the denizens of central Texas hold a marathon music festival at the Hurlbut Ranch in Dripping Springs. The humongous affair is called *Woodshock* and everybody who is anybody comes to play. Seattle's **U-Men** brought their Aussie-inspired swamp grumble and scream to the 1985 edition while **Moto-X** played deep and crawling

sludge/fuzz guitar. It started on the afternoon of June 29 and went on through the night and into the dark morning hours of the 30th. Knowns and unknowns shared the same stage. From the dirty garage punk of **Son of Sam** through **Zeiggeist's** warmly-flowing version of *The Porgy and Bess* ballad "Summertime," *Woodshock '85* is a strong and varied collection of 22 mid-'80s underground rockers, captured live and frozen in time. A lone and whiny troubadour, **Daniel Johnston** sings in his full Texan nasal glory to the accompaniment of just his own forcefully strummed acoustic guitar, while the **Vertibeads** jangle out from a sea of tape hiss to present their Athens-Atlantis-flavored instrumental, "The Harmonic Song." My only gripe about this four-sided extravaganza is that hiss, which mars some tracks though not others, in this age of Dolby A, B, C, and dbx noise-reduction systems, hiss should be a distant relic, remembered by only the oldest and grayest of engineers. You can get this record and an accompanying *Woodshock '85* booklet (which is free with the record but has to be requested separately) from El Jefe Records, 225 Congress St., Suite #203, Austin, TX 78701

When the word punk was new it may have meant something. Hard to tell what from what it has come to mean today. Punk music was hard and rough. Commercial music of that era was glossy and gutless—punk was all gut and little else. The main difference between punk and mainstream music was that the powers-that-be detested punk. They wouldn't listen to it or write about it, they only spoke of it with a condescending sneer. Punk wasn't a style of music and it certainly wasn't leather jackets with zippers and pins. It was an unfocused collection of soundmakers who had crossed beyond the mainstream's acceptable fringe. The penalty for such nonconformity was not rejection but oblivion. They were doing something new and people didn't know how to listen to it. **Ritual Tension** make noncommercial music outside of even punk's accepted norms. Tension's songs are hard and repetitive. As with early punk, it takes some listening and thinking to figure out how to hear their sound. It's rough, without melody, and coldly alien—alienated, too. Ivan Nahem doesn't really sing, he recites lyrics with a hollow, atonal singsong while his brother Andrew's guitar produces scratchy streaks that bubble around each other in deeply etched shimmers and grate like a rusty pole. On tracks like "The Wrong Tack" the guitar squeals and seems to be on the verge of a sonic boiling point it never quite reaches. Even jingle bells in the background can't lighten the darkness of "Tack's" sound. On "Tied to the Mast" Ivan's throat explodes with chicken-squawk blurs and grumbles

Left: *Ritual Tension* (top to bottom) Marc Sloan, Ivan Nahem, and Andrew Nahem.



Drew Weil

while the guitar plays single notes that go down, down, and deeper down. Ritual Tension's album *I Live Here* is an alienated slice of music that isn't songs or tunes and will not find a happy home on the stereos of U2 and R.E.M. fans. Ritual Tension is a sparse and foreign dose of appropriately named energy waiting for the recoil. Sometimes arty, always beyond the fringe, *I Live Here* is available through the Independent Label Alliance, PO Box 594M, Bay Shore, New York 11706 or from their Manhattan-based label Sacrifice, PO Box 488, New York, NY 10009.

Uzi's *Sleep Asylum* begins in a nightmare as a reverb-strangled guitar groans sheets of softly grating feedback, and vocalist Thalia Zedek moans a pained

Ritual Tension make noncommercial music outside of even punk's accepted norms.

and keyless "From Tehran" against its noise. The track then thunders out of control with a clear, bass-heavy wall of guitar building into a powerhouse of din, which buries such treasures as Thalia's whispers in the song's dark, dense mix. More than one of Boston's ordinary local ensembles, Uzi was a band of conflict and contradiction held in tenuous balance by an eternal process of compromise. That process gave a richness to their music, but also inevitably blew the band apart. On one side were the experimenters finding melodic percussion in a calmly dripping faucet and hiding curious noises behind the guitar's wall of sound. On the other side were the traditionalists who knew how to rock. They kept the dreamers from floating off beyond accessibility. The two factions fought and bickered. Then they compromised and fought some more. By their last performance, the band didn't even drive to shows together. They split before this, their debut LP, was released, but not before fighting about



Above: Dr. Bombay (L.R. Rob Windfield, Lisa Cortes, Greg Cawyer, and Bob McKeown)—the sound of a million snails screaming. Left: A good read—if you're French.

what would be on it and how it would be mixed. Their vinyl remains a vital testimonial to the beauty and strength that well-channeled conflict can create. "On 'Ha Ha Ha' I wanted to have the white noise up really high and the vocals really low, but the other members in the band said 'No, no, no, the vocals have to be up front,'" recalled Thalia, "so that's the way it came out." Opening over a mad scientist caldron bubbling over a single, jangly guitar played one string at a time, "Ha"—like the other four tracks on the album—soon gives way to a sound that's comfortingly familiar with a tantalizingly alien twist. Danny Lee plays solid bashing drum thunks that break into a little frenzy at the opening of each verse while Bob Young mixes post-U2-R.E.M. jangles with loud, crimping blasts. Thalia growls in a deliberately off-key and slightly nasal rasp. Tamer than her rough and grumble live performances, which found her screaming in bursts not unlike the Israeli firebrand for which the band was named, she's still a voice to be reckoned with, and Uzi is a band to be heard. You can hear them by contacting Homestead Records, c/o Dutch East India Trading, PO Box 570, Rockville Centre, NY 11571.

For an unusual perspective on American music there's *NineTeen*, a big, slick but not glossy rock magazine written entirely in French. The March 1986 issue contains features on X, Jeffrey Lee Pierce, Sky Saxon, and a Bruce Joyner and the Plantations flexi-disc. There's also a Pete Frame-style family tree on Australia's 1977-'80 underground. Most

of the band features are followed by careful discographies, and there are enough contact addresses in a single issue to keep a diligent American out of postage stamps through March 1987. The back cover, for instance, lists 94 separate rock programs on various French radio stations including "Batman Time," "Gulp! Yes, But in English," and "Le Cauchemar des Parents." For those who've studied or are currently studying French, *NineTeen* sure beats practice dialogue about setting books on, under, or next to tables. In US record stores, copies run about \$4. Subscriptions or individual issues may be obtained from *NineTeen* at BP 33, 31012, Toulouse cedex, France. Price varies depending on whether the magazine is mailed by air or sea.

Shimmering with gauzy dissonance as a scratchily whisper-edged voice repeats "I run away" over a sparsely romantic piano, *Les Larmes* (which is French for "the tears") bring an elegant and arty touch to balladeering on their album *Live*. "Live" rhymes with give in the case of this Los Angeles quartet who occasionally play the subterranean art-grottoes and underground rock ghettos of their town. Only guitarist Jeffrey Charroux is actually French, *Les Larmes* take themselves very seriously—with tune titles that include "Didactic Relish" and "Dresden Blatck." This heavy approach to what is essentially light ear-candy music sometimes produces a mutant humor such as in their pseudo-heavy cover of "Ode to Bill Joy." Stripped of any hint of country, "Joy" drones on with rusty guitar grates that swirl like a hookah-smoker's snake charm, plodding along to piccolo accompaniment with a half-dead voice that seems to care not a whit about Bill Joy's suicide. The singer's seen it all before. *Live* is a strange album that often falls prey to the bugaboos that turned progressive rock into pomp-crash. But when they forget about how important rock music is and play, they come up with a combination of bounce, gloom, and ennui that my ears at least haven't heard before. Like the nursery-rhyme girl who had a little curl right in the middle of her forehead, when *Les Larmes* are good they are very, very good and when they are bad they are horrid. Le label Lost Arts Records à PO Box 85338, Los Angeles, CA 90072 est la place du contact!

To contact me write to P.O. Box 4904, Panorama City, California 91412. That's also the address to submit records to be considered for review. (Sorry, I can't review demo tapes. To be eligible for review, a record or tape must be available for purchase.) If you don't have a record (or even if you do), I'll send you parts one through three of my underground press flier. It's a review of rock magazines and fanzines around the world. You can also get a copy of my best/worst band names list. All you need to do is send me a request and a self-addressed, stamped envelope.



Singles

As is evidenced by both *Absolute Beginners* and *Sigue Sigue Sputnik*, England is currently mired in nostalgia. Which is all right for England. But as the punk and post-punk generation matures, it seems to be groping desperately for any glimmer of the youth culture punk failed to reestablish. The awkward, raw '60s pop covers that sounded bold or at least fun in the late '70s now sound like the work of tired old pros, as everybody grabs for that Hall and Oates authenticity. It's hard to resist any remake of "Fever," "Venus," or "The Locomotion," although the versions below do their best to ease the job. But more than that, they herald a failure of ambition. Even Annabella couldn't have believed the world needed another version of "Fever."

Afrika Bambaataa: "Bambaataa's Theme" b/w "Tension" (Tommy Boy)

These are rough times for the founder of the Zulu Nation. He built a rep as an organizer and leader in the Bronx, then made a couple of great records with Arthur Baker and John Robie, another with James Brown, and later an epochal but not terribly interesting single with John Lydon. In the process, his myths have run together. Bambaataa was never important for his marginal rapping ability. Without a strong producer, he's now struggling; his name means nothing to a hip-hop audience that was maybe six years old when he made "Planet Rock." This 12 inch slice of frustration finds Bambaataa throwing darts at a board. The A-side is an instrumental apparently aimed at Miami Vice. "Tension" is a street ballad with enough idiosyncratic kick to

be a lesser George Clinton track. Pretty cool, but even with the reprised utopian themes, it's no "Looking for the Perfect Beat." Hold out for *Soulsonic Force's* greatest hits album if you're uninitiated

Sandie Shaw: "Are You Ready to Be Heartbroken" b/w "Hand in Glove" (Polydor UK import)

Few worldly objects satisfy like a good conventional single. With familiar sonic smooches that conjure false memories of a happy childhood, a good mainstream single is like mother's milk, a graceful first kiss (oxymoron, I know), and keys to the family Jaguar, all in one deceptively sweet package. Sandie Shaw's delightfully uninventive latest, co-written by Lloyd Cole, is an instant-classic fuck you song. "What would it take," she asks,

rather pointedly, given the context, "to wipe that smile off your face?" The answer isn't this song, that's for sure. This is an idol threat, a slick exhibition put on solely for your entertainment, crafted to make you feel more, not less, secure. It delivers the sort of simple pleasure that Morrissey's insistent earnestness denies. I mean, do we feel for Shaw's heartache? No way, Jose. With a full but not too corny wall of sound behind her, she seems like she's just modeling her pain, and it looks damned good on her. In the middle of better records, you'll wish you were listening to this. Then you'll let it gather dust until your grandchildren uncover it. If they ask about the Smiths cover on the B-side, tell 'em the sun never really shone out of her behind

Colourbox featuring Lorita Grahame: "Baby I Love You So" b/w "Looks Like We're Shy One Horse" & "Shoot Out" (4AD import)

In a break from the usual 4AD apocalyptic sludge, Colourbox punches its dreads levers with a heavy reggae groove, spiced up with tasty dub effects. The groove is surprisingly proficient, but this single gets over on Lorita Grahame's vocal. While the band goes way deep into bass culture, Grahame pays their appropriations no never mind and just wails on the tune, lingering in sweet spots and gliding along its melody with just a slight yearning itch. With different backing, this might sound like a reverent Smokey Robinson tribute; with different singing, it'd be an open invitation to buy Augustus Pablo records instead. Impurity saves the day. "Looks Like We're Shy One Horse" is a dub of the A side, with snatches of dialogue from Sergio Leone's *Once Upon a Time in the West* and Ennio Morricone approximations on the guitar. Not very convincing. The borrowed Eastwood fascination that works for *Big Audio Dynamite* doesn't sound genuine here. These guys have neither Don Letts's ironic wit nor a Jamal can interest in Clint. "Shoot Out" sounds like 4AD gothic pretension with a bass line thrown in

Stealing the Show

Column by John Leland

The Real Roxanne With Hitman Howie Tee: "Bang Zoom (Let's Go Go)" b/w "Howie's Teed Off" (Select)

Good God, y'all, this girl can't rap. And yet here's her second great single. As with so many rap records, all the credit goes to the producers. Pranksters Full Force throw every gimmick they know into the mix, making this not so much a song as a series of unrelated episodes. One minute it's a go-go bit, with rolling, distorted hand drums; the next, it's a ballad. Stick around and you'll hear lush harmonies, a bit of Full Force's own "Alice," an adaptation from Whistle's "Just Buggin'," a Fred Astaire show tune, Elmer Fudd singing "The Rabbit Kicked the Bucket," and even the beat from "The Real Roxanne." At the last, the record stops and Roxanne apologizes, "Sorry, wrong beat." Then it

Above: Zulu Nation founder Afrika Bambaataa on his way to Miami Vice.

takes off again. There's nothing really great about this beyond the producers' attitude to let it all hang out. Full Force set out to amuse, and they do just that. As with "Roxanne, Roxanne" and "The Real Roxanne," they've taken rap off the street without watering it down

Annabella: "Fever" (RCA)

Bananarama: "Venus" (London)

Dave Stewart and Barbara Gaskin: "The Locomotion" (Broken import)

Yeah, right. This ain't rock 'n' roll, this is genocide. Only hope that you aren't this graceless when you try to tell your grandchildren what rock was

Phantom Tollbooth: "Valley of the Gwangi" b/w "Flip Your Lid" & "The Whaling Ultimate" (Homestead)

"Flip, flip, flip your lid/That's what she did," warls bassist and sometime singer Gerard Smith over a dense tom-tom pattern on the flipside and killer track of this 7-inch single. Phantom Tollbooth, a three-piece something-or-other punk band from Long Is and, speaks to you in ejaculations: blurted out bits of information or flat-out sprints. Like most s-o-o punk bands, Tollbooth hauls out the requisite Neil Young/Byrds influences. But at its best this band is a rhythm, not a texture. For instance, the punky "Eight Miles High"-ish "Gwangi" loses its energy in an uninspired guitar solo, then stops, inhales, and returns at double strength with the drummer cracking and folding the music along new seams. The stop-and-start "Flip Your Lid" builds in modular, unconnected blocks, with Smith's otherwise unaccompanied screaming over the drums the central figure. "The Whaling

Ultimate" is a deliberately aimless instrumental jam that wouldn't shame Black Flag.

Kronos Quartet: "Purple Haze" (Elektra)

This novelty record is just what it sounds like: a string quartet doing Hendrix's "Purple Haze." Not the most promising idea — at this point, who's going to be surprised that classical musicians grew up on rock? — and the Kronos crew starts off bound for the Penguin Caté Orchestra's bland hipness. Until the guitar solo. Or in this case, the violin solo. The center disintegrates, the joke elevates, and the record becomes less an excuse than a translation. At this point, who's going to expect classical musicians to play a Hendrix solo note for note? When they leave behind the song and the pronounced beat, the quartet actually rocks. Even if it is still a dumb idea. Like frozen margaritas, a valid asset of yuppie culture

Easterhouse: "Inspiration" (Rough Trade import)

"Try to imagine/The courage it takes. Standing against all odds/just ten brave men," sings Andy Perry on "Inspiration," a slow anthem about Bobby Sands and the Irish hunger strikers who died in prison in 1976. This four-song EP is a heavyweight political record, with heavyweight impact and heavyweight problems. Perry translates the heraldic spiritualism of L2's "Pride" into a closer historical context, while maintaining the mythic bluster. This record is about heroism, not oppression. But while Perry's strained yodel is compelling and possibly even galvanizing, these lyrics indicate



that the good fight is still to come. Beyond the "against all odds" and "ten brave men" above, you'll find couplets like, "Can these dark few graves/Hold the best of the brave?" and "The savage beat of soldiers' feet.../That crushed the lie of justice." And there's still "Johnny I Hardly Knew You" to contend with. All of which wouldn't be so annoying were it not for the potent rock around them. You can argue the impossibility of subtle political rock. Or you can listen to your Phil Ochs records

Jimmy Cliff & Elvis Costello and the Attractions: "Seven Day Weekend" b/w **Jimmy Cliff: "Brightest Star"** (Columbia)

This inoffensive soundtrack collaboration impressively misses the mark in three distinct ways. For the overpriced music consultant for the movie *Club Paradise* who thought Costello and Cliff would make a boho duo, the making has no chemistry. Both singers sound like they mailed in their parts. For Cliff, who must have approached the project as a last desperate attempt to break the American rock market, the record all but eliminates anything distinct we about his contribution. This is clearly a Costello record with a Cliff vocal tacked on. And for Costello, to whom the record must have meant easy money and a chance to make up with the Attractions after replacing them with session players for most of his last album, the cut is a complete flop: there's no use throwing your slighted friends a bone this meager. "Seven Day Weekend" is a signature Attractions boogie song, played hard and too fast in the band's pub tradition. Just the sort of amphetamine thing Costello has acknowledged as defeat. Nick Lowe's asleep-at-the-wheel production tempers some of the record's crassness, but this clichéd weekend song still seems less a throwaway than something thrown directly at us. Cliff's B-sides are irredeemably weak

Left: Phantom Tollbooth (L-R Dave Rick, Gerard Smith, and John Coats) plays something-or-other punk. Above: David Bowie tries desperately to fool anybody.



Sideswipes

Domestic Rough Trade has licensed and reissued the Jesus and Mary Chain's first and best single, "Upside Down," with a cover of Syd Barrett's "Vegetable Man" on the B side. "Upside Down" is a great surf pop song with killer feedback. Neither of these songs is on the album . . . **The Freshmen's "Who Me?"** (Select), produced with a sick "A" ice-type shuffle beat and insistent tape hooks by Man Parrish, continues the curious hip-hop tradition of rappers calling other people liars while bragging about their own cars, millions, and women . . . **The Smiths' "Brigmouth Strikes Again"** (Rough Trade) finds Morrissey making the unlikely claim, "Now I know how Joan of Arc felt," and moaning, "I've got no right to take my place in the human race." Fortunately, guitarist Johnny Marr kicks ass, and the whole group rocks harder than they did on the last album . . . in the wake of the Village People revival engineered by Frankie Goes to Hollywood, former V.P. cowboy Randy Jones returns as the leader of **Popular Front**, whose "Terrorist Attack" (ZYX) clones the spoken word/disco beat trend and still manages to sound dated. My hat is off . . . **U.T.F.O.** brings out another shuffle beat on the infectiously busy "We Work Hard" (Select), on which the group sings a snatch of "Ain't Nothing Like the Real Thing" to support the title. Another hot Brooklyn pop record from Full Force . . . **He Said**, led by former Wire lynchpin Graham Lewis, builds a dense, slow electronic artpop groove on "Pump" (Mute import), a dark groover that redeems itself with a decent hook and is a vast improvement over "Only One I" . . . **M.C. Story** (Fever), a trite rap with weak synth effects and backup singing, nonetheless further supports M.C. Chill's claim as Cleveland's chief rocker . . . D.C. art-punkers **Madhouse** slide into their own pretensions on the disappointing "Mecca" b/w "So Sad" (Fountain of Youth), the latter presented in a "quiet evening version" that exposes its essential vapidity. Unpromising stuff from a band whose debut EP seemed to herald better things . . . **David Bowie's** bright "Underground" (EMI America), from the *Labyrinth* soundtrack, is too cold to be cheering, until it turns into an outtake from the score of *Hair* in the chorus. Not bad but irrelevant . . . **The Residents** aren't out of jokes, but they're out of good ones, or so their merely idiosyncratic versions of Hank Williams's "Kaw-Liga" and John Philip Sousa's "Stars and Stripes Forever" (Ralph) indicate . . . Frank Tovey, al as **Fad Gadget**, offers a manic, brittle mix, odd drums, and the line, "There's a gun in your mouth, but you're afraid to use it" on the technologically ambiguous "Ludd to Joe" (Mute import) . . . **Sigue Sigue Sputnik's** "21st Century Boy" (EMI) sounds suspiciously like "Love Missile F1-11," with a campy apocalyptic feel and a missed opportunity for Jetsons references. Gee, I wish I were the exec who appraised these lads' genius at a million and a half



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I AM OZZY THE GREAT AND TERRIBLE

Everyone believes Ozzy Osbourne is the devil, the perfect scapegoat for hysteria and madness. "To be Ozzy Osbourne, you got to be special," he says. "Because they hit you with so much. If you were soft, you'd be dead."

Article by Glenn O'Brien

Photography by David Michael Kennedy

It was a dirty job, but somebody had to do it. I like to keep busy. Besides, this guy is something else.

What did I know about Ozzy? Not much. He bit a bat. He bit the head off a parakeet in the office of the president of Columbia Records. He used to be in a famous group called Black Sabbath. Now he is a solo act. All of his records are platinum. He was one of the rock stars targeted by the Parents Music Resource Center.¹ He's a happily married family man and is friends with Dr. Ruth Westheimer. I also knew that he had attacked a robot cocktail piano in the bar of a Central Park South hotel and then wrote a man festo to the musicians' union on why he did it. And that he was being sued by the parents of a fan who committed suicide allegedly while listening to Ozzy's "Suicide Solution."

I figured, Hey, why not write about him? This is an interesting person.

OK, that's all I knew about O.O., I admit it. I say admit only because one expects a writer to be an expert on the subject, if not a partisan or foe. But everybody's writing about Khaddafi. If they can write about Khaddafi, I can write about Ozzy. At least I've met the man.

I have never seen Ozzy perform. To my knowledge,

before meeting Ozzy I'd never heard an Ozzy Osbourne or Black Sabbath record, and I'm almost as old as Reggie Jackson. Ozzyites will say I should stop here, but I say, "By golly, it's not my fault."

I wouldn't have accepted the assignment if I hadn't seen this video on MTV. It was psychedelic in a real farmer cheese kind of way. The group had really long hair and looked real y adolescently cool and had a sort of Cro-Magnonesque nobility about them. They were just standing there playing in front of a pastel light show that resembled the effect achieved by placing moderate pressure on the eyebalins. The music was really janitorial. I dug it. I figured it was the next big group. This is the most Stoogesque group of the '80s, I reflected casually. Seconds later, I wondered if Redd Kross could have grown up so fast.

When the little tag came on at the end, it said the song was "Paranoid" by Black Sabbath. "Gosh," I thought, "Black Sabbath is fresh."

"Maybe," I said to myself later without moving my lips, "I really missed out on those 16 years of Black Sabbath." Of course, I soon realized that was all water under the bridge. But it was not too late for me to meet Ozzy Osbourne.

Ozzy is on tour. His tours last years. He travels the country by bus with his band, his crew, and the guitars and flamethrowers and hardware. Today he's

in Garden City, NY. Tonight he's at the Nassau Coliseum.

When you first see Ozzy, sitting there getting his hair blown dry by his personal hairdresser, you realize that you are in the presence of somebody.² He looks like somebody. Maybe it's aura. Maybe it's attitude. Maybe it's practice. Ozzy reminded me a little of Iggy Pop and a little of Mason Reese. His eyes are too big for his head. Baby fat makes him look smooth and cute.

Ozzy looks like a wild, fat, happy kid, like Piggy from *Lord of the Flies* grown up.

Ozzy looks like the perfect scapegoat. He's so cute. He looks like the chunky kid caught with his hand in the cookie jar. Is Ozzy the devil? It looks doubtful. Is he in league with the devil? Well, what league? The majors, the minors? Let's look at the facts. If we're going to have a witch-hunt, let's at least bone up on our demonology. Let's call a devil a devil, a gremlin a gremlin, and a troll a troll.

Ozzy is certainly not a devil. If anything, he is a benign gremlin, not too dissimilar from the early-American TV star Froggie the Gremlin.

Plunk your magic twanger, Ozzy. Hiya k ds! Hiya Hiya!

Ozzy doesn't believe in magic, but he's got the magic of rock 'n' roll, I think Ozzy is basically into a demurgically wholesome boogeyman mode. It's a little primitive. Like postmodern Visigoth minstrelsy.



But it's important for the kids. It's a Resource, if you like. Oz is a panic, and as such rates as something of a landmark and deserves all the protections accorded landmarks

Ozzy moves his chair into the sun. He looks out over Garden City and says to his valet, "Bring me a packet of those vitamins, will ya?"

"You look good, Ozzy."

"I lost some weight."

"How much?"

"Twenty-eight pounds."

"How did you lose twenty-eight pounds?"

"Jogged. I started jogging a lot. At one point I was jogging three miles a day."

They counted those miles on the speedometer of the bus from which dangled the bottle of wine Ozzy chased. Just kidding

"I know this guy who was a bone bender—what do you call it? a chiropractor! He's also got a sort of a clinic where he does hydro. Hydro! You know, they sort of suck all the shit out of your body, clean your whole system out. He says red meat is fucking disgusting shit. It stays in there forever."

Ozzy takes a large magenta antibiotic.

So, Ozzy . . . tell us a little bit about yourself

"I'm Ozzy. I work hard. Play hard. Father of five children who I love dearly. I take vitamins every day."

Ozzy is most effectively, some say brilliantly, managed by his wife Sharon, professionally, personally, and maybe intimately, too. Between community property and the usual 10 to 15 percent, that would seem to give her a majority of Ozzy. But he seems to have enough of himself left to be happy. Sharon is home minding the kids. Ozzy has assistant

managers, valets, hairdressers, and a big bodyguard to mind him and watch out for flying cookie jars

So, Oz, what's your day like?

"I live at night more than the day. I travel through the night. It keeps me out of trouble. If we stay in the town after the gig, it's crazy. A photographer from your magazine came to the show last night, and he was white with fear at the end of the show. The audiences tend to get sort of very, uh . . . I don't know why this last tour . . . I've noticed a hell of a lot of violence and destructiveness from the people I don't know if it's the changing of time or what. When we did the Meadowlands, there was \$172,000 worth of damage to the hall. I remember different tours from different incidents. But there seems to be a hell of a lot of tension in the people now."

"It is obvious that a person living in a state of pain requires a different form of religion from a person living normally."

—Antonin Artaud, *Theater of Cruelty Manifesto*

Do your audiences change?

"Definitely. The last tour I did, they were all into this glam kind of thing. We were touring with Motley Crue, and there was lots of chicks there. This time we got lots of chicks, but the guys get real heavy. I don't know why. But they're cool, my people. They're all right."

"I sat down and thought last night, I thought, 'Fuckin' 'e I, Osbourne, you been doin' this an awful long time. Eighteen years I been doin' this. It's wild, man. It's bigger than ever!'

"I'm doing a part in a movie on Wednesday. The movie's called *Trick or Treat*. It's quite interesting. I'm looking forward to it. I play a vicar, a priest

"I believe in God. Every night onstage I say, 'God bless you all,' and that's from the heart, man."

One of these Bible punchers who puts down heavy metal. I go on a chat show. The story is about a kid who has found this secret thing in a record and has become possessed by the demon in a heavy metal record. And he can do things."

Do you think anybody ever put any secret messages in their records?

"I'm sure they did after people started claiming there were secret messages in there. I honestly believe that people don't understand that as soon as they come up with an idea—they, not us—there's always some little guy in a back-street band thinking, 'Fuck this, I want to be where Ozzy is—I'll do it!'

If I was going to put some backward message in a record I'd put in something like, "This is the Devil! Buy six more copies of this record."

"Six hundred and sixty-six more!"

"A coauthor of the *Mr. Ed* theme song, which two Ohio ministers say conveys satanic messages, says his tune about the talking horse is innocuous—backward and forward. But the fuss is OK with songwriter Jay Livingston. Radio stations nationwide have been playing the song backward since the ministers complained, and Livingston gets royalties for it."

—New Orleans Times-Picayune

"You can make whatever you want out of whatever you want. They're trying to sue me in California about this kid who shot himself. It says in this one line, 'Breaking laws, locking doors, but there's no one at home/Make your bed, rest your head, but you lie there and moan/Where to hide? Suicide is the only way out', or something. But that's one paragraph in the song, and the song is about alcoholism. The danger of alcohol. A certain percentage of alcoholics can't stand it anymore, and they jump off a fucking building. They can't live with it anymore. But the press picks up on one line in a song and keeps shouting it down people's throats. They're saying this fucking song forced this kid to shoot himself. The kid was fucking well sick in the mind long before he ever heard an Ozzy Osbourne record. Why are they trying to tag it on us guys? To be Ozzy Osbourne, you got to be somebody special. Because they hit you with so much shit . . . if you were soft anywhere, if you were susceptible, a magnet for emotion, you'd be dead. And I cannot no way take no responsibility for some guy who puts a gun to his head."

"A guy in New York a few months ago got a big tax demand, and he couldn't pay it, and he jumped out the window of a fifty-story apartment. What does his wife do? Sue the government!"

"You see a perfectly normal kid there who doesn't show any signs of depression at all—happy. Then six hours later, he's dead. Nobody can explain it. The only thing we know is that he was listening to this music."

—Mr. McCullum³

"The police photo shows the headphones were still on when he died."

Mrs. McCullum⁴

"They knew this record was going to encourage or promote suicide. . . . I think we have in this case

opposing forces: Satan and God. . . ."
—the McCullums' attorney⁵

"It's gettin' crazy. It's like watching the rise and fall of the Roman Empire. Being an outsider . . . I mean, I spend a lot of time in America, but I am a foreign person . . . and I really do love this country . . . but watching the different political changes and fashions, I see it going from happy faces to anger.

"I don't know why they're angry. Whether they're getting high on some weird shit or what, I don't know. It's kind of very radical."

Are there songs you don't do now because it's a message you no longer want to project?

"No, I suddenly realized that when I was a drug addict, I used to write things like 'flying high again,' 'snowblind,' all this shit. And the other night, I thought, 'Fuckin' ell, I sing one song for it and then straight after I sing one song against it.' But the thing is, that's OK. Because that was where I was when I wrote that, so why shouldn't I do it? It's part of my life. It's a part of what I am and what I will be. I might start singing fucking religious songs. I don't think so, but if I choose to, why not? To think that you can't sing stuff from your last album because now you're a different man is bullshit. If they're good enough to write and good enough to hear and to buy, then they're good enough to sing onstage, you know? I'm not ashamed of anything that I've done in the past.

"We all have a little bit of a skeleton in our cupboard that we think, 'fuck, I don't want to talk about that again. But it don't really bother me, if I can help it. It's like saying, 'I wish I hadn't bought a red car.' You bought it, so drive it.'

"I'm a Christian. I was christened as a Christian. I used to go to Sunday school. I never took much interest in it because . . . I didn't.

"My idea of heaven is feeling good. A place where people are all right to each other. This world scares the shit out of me. We're all living on the tinderbox. It's like there's some maniac somewhere trying to devise a new means of destruction. It always amazes me that mankind always goes to find the biggest, powerfulest means of destruction before they find anything good. It's always the negative things they find first.

"Since I've had kids I've thought, 'What are we leaving these people? Nothing.' What a future we've got for mankind."

Andreas Vollenweider said, "I wouldn't play on the same bill as Black Sabbath or any other group with such an obvious unconscious negative approach." Do you think you have an unconscious negative approach?

"These people are so ignorant. They've never listened to the band. They look at the album cover and think it's shit. They ought to stop and listen to the lyrics. I write so much positive stuff! Food for thought. Like 'Killer of Giants,' 'Revelation Mother Earth,' 'War Pigs'—I could go on for years. If anybody thinks for one minute that I am a negative person, then they're fucked. Because I am not a negative person. I am a very truthful person, true to what I believe. I can only do what I believe in. If I was a fake at what I was doing, I couldn't do it.

What does your audience get out of your music?
"Energy."

"OK, I mention the word 'death.' I mention the word 'evil,' but in the context of the story—it's like 'Mary Had a Little Lamb.' They all think I'm singing, 'Satan, Satan, Satan, Satan . . . death, murder, murder.' They think that's all that comes out of my mouth. They never stop to listen. They've already prejudged me and tried me, and I ain't gonna sit there trying to defend myself. Anybody that knows

Ozzy Osbourne and knows what I'm about knows me anyway. And if doing what I'm doing is wrong, I'm sorry."

Are there negative groups?

"I don't really know. I never judge anything. I always think if people like it, there's got to be something good about it. I don't like certain things—thrash metal is too intense for me, and punk's even worse. But that's what I don't like."

"They're telling me I'm putting ideas of people shooting themselves in their heads. I was watching MTV the other day, and there was a band come on called the Pet Shop Boys, and you want to hear the opening lyrics of that song? 'There's a madman in town/Put a gun to your head/Pull the trigger.' Something like that. I thought, 'My God, that's probably going right over their heads, but if it was Ozzy Osbourne singing that song, I'd have fuckin' pilgrims down at the hotel in a minute.'

"I'm not sober. I still drink. Not as heavily. When I was on drugs, I always tried never to go onstage stoned. I used to get my highs after the show. The reason I quit taking drugs was I was bored. I was bored of being bored, sick and tired of being sick

"Hell, to me, is nuclear holocaust. It's the biggest fear I have as a man."

and tired. I should try and quit the booze, but I got to have some release. I don't drink as much hard liquor as I used to. I drink a bit of wine and a few beers. It's not as bad as it was. I shouldn't be doing that. I should be totally sober. I can't get to grips with it. It's a hard thing to do."

"Osbourne was unhurt when, on March 19, 1982, near Orlando, Florida, his tour plane, which was buzzing his tour bus, hit a house. Osbourne and most of his band were in the bus; Osbourne's guitarist Randy Rhoads, hairdresser Rachel Youngblood, and pilot/bus driver Andrew Aycock were all in the plane and were all killed."
—Encyclopedia of Rock and Roll

"If hell is worse than this place, then those of us going to hell are on a hard ride down, baby. Hell, to me, is nuclear holocaust. It's the biggest fear I have as a man. It worries the pants off me that we're all going to blow ourselves to shit. And it will happen, I believe. I can see it will happen. I asked my old drummer Tommy, 'Do you think they'll use the atom bomb?' And he said, 'Ozzy, they've never made a gun that hasn't been fired in anger.' I thought, 'Shit, that's right, man.'"

"I'd rather have people get rid of their aggression at an Ozzy concert than by beating some old lady over the head and running off with her purse. It's a release of aggression. It's built-in aggression. Why do they get young people to join the army? Because an older guy thinks, 'Fuck you! I'm not going over that hill. You think I'm crazy?' And a young guy will go, 'Yeah! Let's go get 'em.'





"I went to join the army once when I was depressed and pissed off. They wouldn't have me for some reason."

"I always wanted to be a Beatle. And I guess I sort of am in a funny way. This is my dream come true."

"I know guys I went to school with, same age as me, and you talk to them and it's like talking to a fucking backward person. Being in touch with young people, you get to know what's going on a lot more, you know? I'll always be a rock 'n' roller."

"I don't see where he [guitarist Tony Iommi] gets off using the name Black Sabbath on his own. To me, it's almost sacrilegious."

O.O. in *Hit Parader*

"I think it's a sin what they've done with the name. I can't relate to them. I don't even remember being with them. It's like an old girlfriend, and you can't remember what it was like to sleep with her. I mean, we were the pioneers of this mode, this form of music. Yes, Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, Uriah Heep . . .

"But I don't understand the word heavy metal. I don't know where it came from. It certainly wasn't from us people."

I think it came from William Burroughs.

"From who?"

"We didn't have a clue what we'd done. I remember we were walking around with no dough. We were trying to find a gig. And Tommy said, 'You know what we should do? Look at that fucking movie

house over there.' There was the fucking *Monster From the Bottom of the Bog* or something on, and there was a queue for this hideous stupid horror film. And he said, 'Why don't we do a band and make it horror rock—see how it goes?' Geezer thought of the name Black Sabbath. We decided to call the band Black Sabbath on a ferry going to Germany.

"We were so original, we came to America and freaked everybody out."

Black Sabbath may have taken its name directly from a movie marquee. The film *Black Sabbath* was a 1964 Italian production directed by Ario Bava and starring Boris Karloff, Michelle Mercier, and Mark Damon. Boris plays Gorca, a Balkan vampire who preys on his loved ones.

"I never have been involved in the occult. I wouldn't know how to conjure up a spirit any more than I could conjure up a teapot. I'm not what they think I am."

It was reported in the papers that 65 percent of the college kids in America believe in angels. Do you believe in angels?

"In angels? Like fuckin' Gideon or something? Sixty-five percent of the college students in America believe in angel dust."

"After I bit the head off the bat, the animal rights people came after me every night. Probably right after they finished eating their Colonel Sanders or whatever, telling me I shouldn't be biting the heads off bats. I'll tell you what bats taste like. Like a good

McDonald's.

"If I come back to this earth, I'm coming back as an animal, because people in this world do far more good for animals than they do for people. If a guy is stuck up a tree, they'll leave him there."

"I used to work in an abattoir, a slaughterhouse. Those same people that put me down ought to take a trip down there, fucking walk around one of them places and see how Colonel Sanders gets his chickens. They're not born fried. Somebody has to do some dastardly number on that chicken."

"I once went to an egg farm, and it was hideous. They played loud music for God knows what reason. The eggs are flying out of their assholes like tenpin bowling. The chickens last about a week. It's hideous that people are so fucking naive that they can be concerned about what I do with animals when they're not all vegetarians. Where do they think a steak comes from? Out of the sky? It's OK to kill a cow for a steak, but it's not OK for Ozzy Osbourne to accidentally pick up a bat and bite its head off."

Do you have any pets?

"Yeah, and they all taste fuckin' great."

Without Oz, there would be no Spinal Tap. Oz was among the first rockers to realize that if cartoons imitate life, life can imitate cartoons.

In a way, Oz is the Phil Ochs of heavy metal

When Ozzy isn't in his demurgically wholesome boogeyman mode, he needs protection, like all landmarks

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Marshall H.

Oz, when you come right down to it, does protest music. Oz is the Texas Chainsaw Massacre of folk music. He might not be the latest fashion, but he's about the same old real issues. Ozzy is walking wounded. He is the son of the industrial wasteland, the TV baby born under a bad sign, the sign of the bomb.

"You talk about religion—Jim Jones was religion. Religion can be a good thing. But religion and entertainment are separate. I don't believe in Jesus Christ. I believe in God. I believe there's a higher power. Every night onstage I say, 'God bless you all,' and that's from the heart, man. I think godliness is within you."

"It's like this entertainer in England, at the end of his show he says, 'Good night, and may your God be with you.' That's the way it should be. Because you believe in one thing, you haven't got the right to stuff it down somebody else's throat."

"I send my children to Bible classes. My children go to church. And my kids are my legacy."

So, Ozzy, do you suffer from any occupation-related ailments?

"Alcoholism."

Did you ever have any hearing problems?

"Pardon?"

SIGN: Sagittarius

REAL NAME: John Michael Osbourne

FAVORITE VEGETABLE: Potato

INVESTMENTS: I think so. I don't know. I own some property.

HAT SIZE: Big.

HOBBIES: Hunting and fishing

FAVORITE GAME: Rabbits and pigeons

ATHLETIC SHOE: Nike

QUALITIES TO LOOK FOR IN BODYGUARDS:

Tactful and alert

LAST BOOK READ: *The Amityville Horror*

FAVORITE PERFORMERS: David Bowie, Mick Jagger, David Lee Roth—the greatest front man I've ever seen

FAVORITE VACATION SPOT: Home with the kids.

Ozzy Osbourne has never heard of Ozzie Smith, the greatest shortstop in baseball

"We were touring with this German band and the guy used to put a sign on the microphone to tell him where he was so he could come out and say, 'Hello, Seattle!' We were always changing the signs on him."

"Every night, ten minutes before I go onstage, I go take a dump. I don't need any laxatives. Once you're onstage, you're on there. Some nights I'm good, and some nights I'm terrible. But I think that don't matter. It's the fact you got up there."

Billy Idol said in SPIN that he liked Black Sabbath when he was 14 but not when he was 15.

"That's about right."

Is there any product you'd like to endorse?

"Billy Idol records."

"... What the Public Wants, as it is practised today, must lead its practitioner into lunacy or some form of imbecility, or else, with the stronger minded and more cynical, into a mood of hatred where their millions of 'little charges' are concerned. Hatred of stupidity must result, where it is not succumbed to, in those whose business it is to be incessantly isolating and exploiting it. But a great specialist in stupidity... could only become what he does thanks to the clairvoyance of hatred of some sort. The great journalist or publicity figures with which everybody is familiar probably started with an intense irritation and dislike of the stupidity out of which subsequently they made their great fortune."⁶

—Wyndham Lewis, 1931

What advice would you give to a young band just starting out?

"Have a lot of heart and a lot of determination. Do what you do the best you can."

As I left Ozzy, he shook my hand, smiled, and said, "Thanks." As I walked out the door, he called after me in a stage whisper. He said, "Go easy on the religion, OK?" I understood. Sometimes late at night I'll be watching *Dobie Gillis* and *Father Knows Best* on the Christian Broadcast Network, and I'll drift off to sleep and wake up in the middle of *The 700 Club* to the news of a 5-year-old child checking books on black magic out of a school library. It's a rude awakening. Don't worry, Ozzy, I understand. So do the kids.

But as I got into Epic Records' stretch limo and realized it was two hours until showtime at Nassau Coliseum, I remembered Ozzy telling me about photographer David Kennedy turning white with fear at his show. I told the driver to take me back to Manhattan. I knew Oz would understand.

Back at home I started getting into "Paranoid" and "War Pigs" and all those humongous Oz records I never knew.

For a few months I've been saying to people, "Don't you think it's time the heavy metal bands did something for the ecology?"

It's all part of my Zen training. Now I realize that Ozzy is where it's at in metal consciousness. Ozzy is one guy who's still worried about the bomb. He wants his kids to grow up in a world free from that fear. And he isn't counting on some miraculous intervention. He knows miracles aren't where it's at. The man is a worker. He's working for the continuation of life on earth. And for the entertainment of millions of endangered kiddos. Ozzy's not stupid, but he's able to sing about stupidity at the highest levels.

Peace and love, Ozzy babes.

¹Has anyone ever explained what a Music Resource is? Is some kind of lyrical gas, or rhythmic fossil fuel? ²And, pretty much, not in the presence of something. ³West 57th Street, television interview. ⁴Ibid. ⁵Ibid. ⁶Wyndham Lewis, *The Diabolical Principle*, Haskell House



—Norman Dog

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SPIRIT IN THE DARK

Morrissey says he's celibate, hates Thatcher, DJs, Madonna, pop-music TV shows, and video. "I do feel sad most of the time about most things," he says. "I don't find there is a great deal to get jubilant about." That's show biz.

Article by Jessica Berens

Morrissey," remembers Paul Morley, "was always laughed at in Manchester when we were kids. He was the village idiot. That's the ironic thing—now he's the poet of a generation. But in those days he was 'that-one-in-the-corner, Steve the Nutter'."

Morley left his hometown in the north of England to become a journalist and, subsequently, generalissimo behind the coup that was *Frankie Goes to Hollywood*. Steve the Nutter, meanwhile, maintained a brooding isolation in the bedroom of his mother's house, surrounded by his huge collection of James Dean and New York Dolls memorabilia. Then guitarist Johnny Marr rescued him by appealing to Morrissey's other submerged obsession: celebrity. Steve was, he has since admitted, the kind of person who wore cumbersome overcoats on sweltering summer days, because he believed that what he wore was fashionable and what everyone else wore was not. Jesus knows he wanted to be famous. He craved love.

Steve the Nutter became Morrissey; Marr, Rourke and Joyce became the Smiths, and *Hand in Glove* was released to a receptive UK public in 1982. Morrissey assumed the privilege of being a lowed to voice what everybody secretly thought. Taking the dramatic stance of the Shakespearean fool, Morrissey the Brave shouted his mouth off here, there, and everywhere. He became probably the most quotable person on the British music scene. Rock writers fell gasping at his door.

He gained a reputation for being well read, outspoken, funny, and refreshingly deranged. He hurled gladiolas at his audience, wore a hearing aid onstage, made a singe with discarded '60s pop star Sandie Shaw (his idol along with Oscar Wilde and David Johansen), sported flaccid woolen cardigans and unattractive spectacles of the variety issued by the ailing British National Health Service. "Some people think I invented them." Voluminous floral shirts were selected from Evans, a nationwide chain of shops specializing in clothes for large women.

As a person attracted to the morbid and macabre—*Harold and Maude* (the scene where Harold chops off his own hand), Jackson Pollock (the blood on the canvas), Hemingway (the gun), Jim Morrison (the alcoholic cheeks), Sylvia Plath (debilitating mania), I always found the Smiths' memento mori sensibility appealing. Marr's driving dirges, illuminated by Morrissey's socially conscious lyrics, which dwell on misery, death, loneliness, and despair, are summed up by the quintessential line, "I think about life/And I think about death/And neither one part culturally appeals to me."

Morrissey stays in a quiet apartment near London's upmarket Sloane Square. When I visited him, it was bathed in subdued daylight, cluttered with boxes of

books and the occasional blown-up photograph of himself. Tea was served. He perched at the opposite end of the table. Divested of glasses and contact lenses, he is seriously myopic and admitted he couldn't actually see me from that distance. This was probably a good thing, since I had an insane grin on my face, like one of those girls who used to hang out at the Manson ranch. His sculptured features are a descent, almost greenish. The hair could have been designed by an imaginative hedge trimmer.

His purple shirt, "wildly expensive," was bought in Beverly Hills, his moccasins were suede. Odd for someone whose strong politically green stance was promulgated on the last Smiths album, *Meat Is Murder*. We hear, "The flesh you so fancifully fry/Is not succulent, tasty or nice/It's death for no reason/And death for no reason is MURDER." So, leather shoes then? "I find shoes difficult to be ethical about—one just can't seem to avoid leather. One is trapped, ultimately."

"The monarchy preys on people's ignorance. The royals inspire blind devotion, a devotion that cannot explain itself."

Morrissey was the child of a broken marriage and grew up with his mother, a librarian. His childhood must have been marred by the Moors Murders, a crime spree that astounded England and terrorized Manchester, where it happened. Myra Hindley, an ice-queenish misfit, and Ian Brady, a man obsessed by Hitler, were sent to prison for life. Their crime? Child murder. One of their victims, 10-year-old Lesley Anne Downey, was photographed in pornographic poses and tortured. Her screams were taped and subsequently played to an appalled jury after police found her little body on Saddleworth Moor. She was not the only child who disappeared at that time. Mancunian parents were terrified, and when Brady and Hindley, these extraordinary monsters, were sent to prison in 1966, Morrissey was 7. The song "Suffer Little Children," about that crime, is one of the Smiths' most powerful

*A woman said, 'I know my son is dead,
I'll never rest my hands on his sacred head'
Oh Manchester
So much to answer for*

The song inspired rampant controversy. How can sociopathic child murderers be? "Vowing the Moors Murders is wrong," Morrissey explains. "We must bring it to the fore. If we don't overstate things, they'll continue to happen. We don't forget the atrocities of Hitler, do we? In the north, I was painted as a hideous Satanic monster, and the word was that I had upset Ann West [Lesley Anne's mother]. In fact, I had not, and have since become great friends with her. She is a formidable figure."

The Queen Is Dead, the Smiths' third album, reveals a Morrissey who is, as usual, unrelenting about his opinions. Mouthng off against royalty is rather brave in a country that is by and large staunchly royalist and currently preparing to celebrate the marriage of gnomic Prince Andrew to his lumpen lover, Sarah Ferguson. The monarchy is one of the many things Morrissey hates. "It preys on people's ignorance. I'm of humble origins, and it's the working classes who are always roped in. The royals inspire blind devotion, a devotion that cannot explain itself."

Other things he hates are Mrs. Thatcher, radio disc jockeys ("masturbatory"), radio programs ("I would never be on one, it would be like joining their side"), Madonna ("organized prostitution" he told NME), pop music to envision programs ("one practically has to go into military training to survive one"), the music industry ("if you want to protect yourself in this business, you have to be up very early"), and music videos. The Smiths do not make them.

"I do feel sad most of the time about most things," he mutters. "I don't find there is a great deal to get jubilant about these days. I'm not a manic depressive, just a realist. I'm just not someone you'll see romping about in a haystack, singing and swinging a bottle of cognac." He laughs.

Morrissey says he is celibate. What that means is anybody's free guess. If he'd rather not talk about his love life (and God knows he talks about everything else), why doesn't he say so? He talked occasionally of a girl he had once loved. But if he's frightened now, why doesn't he say so? The truth of this would not be so important if he was not such a staunch exponent of truth and integrity. From "Frankly, Mr. Shankley":

*I want to live and I want to love
I want to catch something
I might be ashamed of*

He is 27. "I'm still waiting to be chosen for the swimming team," he once said. Perhaps he just hasn't grown up yet.



GABRIEL

After flirting with madness, Peter Gabriel took off all the masks and found the hardest role he had to play was himself.

She shaved her head as penance. A darkly handsome young woman with regal cheekbones and easy poise, she rashly eradicated her innate dignity, razoring her lustrous mane right down to the scalp.

The act was in atonement for the affair she'd had with a friend of her husband's, shortly after conceiving their first child. "I think I was just stamping my foot for attention," she would later say of the 1973 infidelity.

Initially startled, her equally intense, impulsive spouse responded to her baldness by also undergoing tonsure.

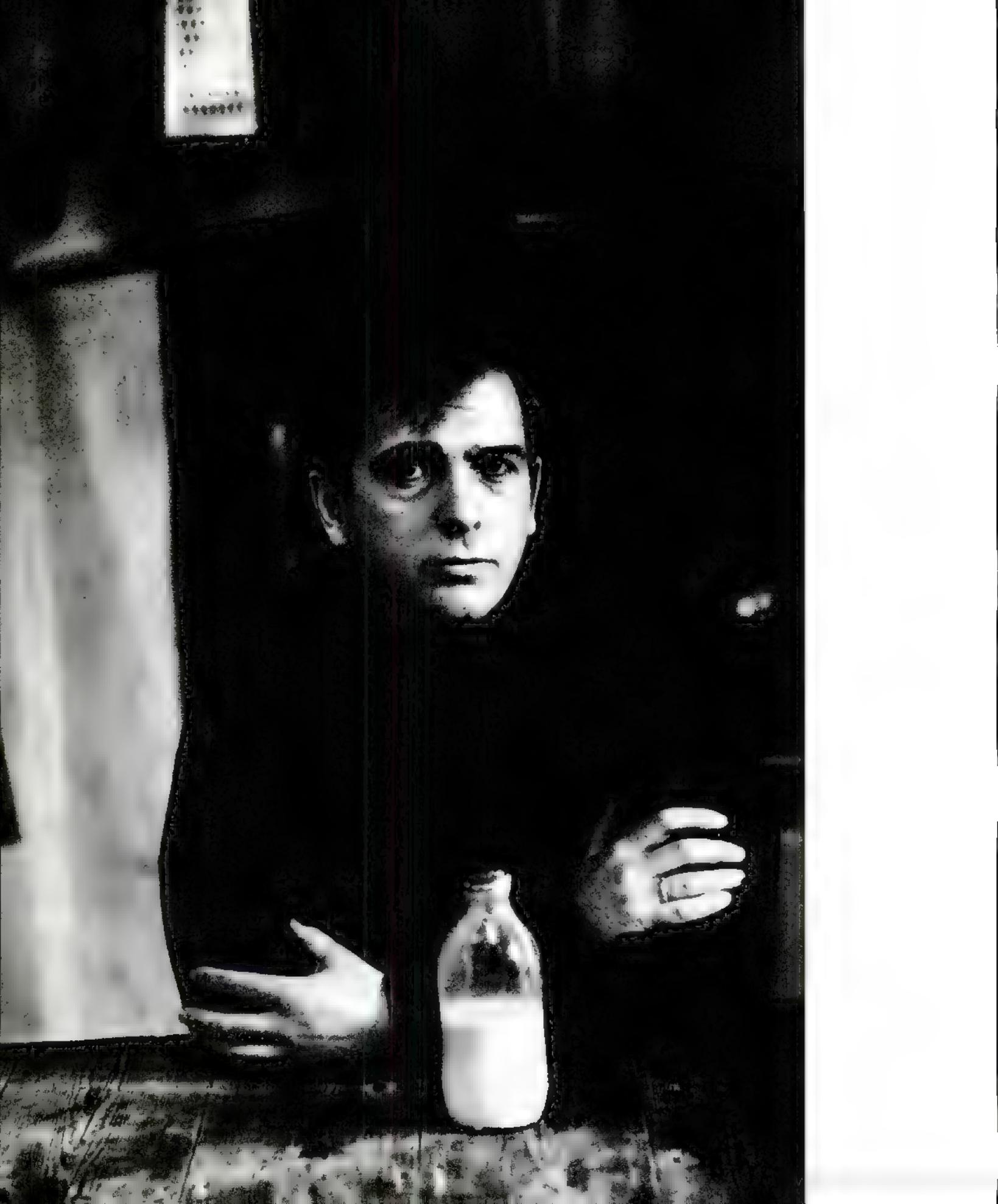
"Now, I look back on it as a cheap, exhibitionist gimmick," says Peter Gabriel. "I wound up using it as a stage device. It was a desperate act to stand apart from others at a time when the competition in the rock 'n' roll profession was so terribly intense."

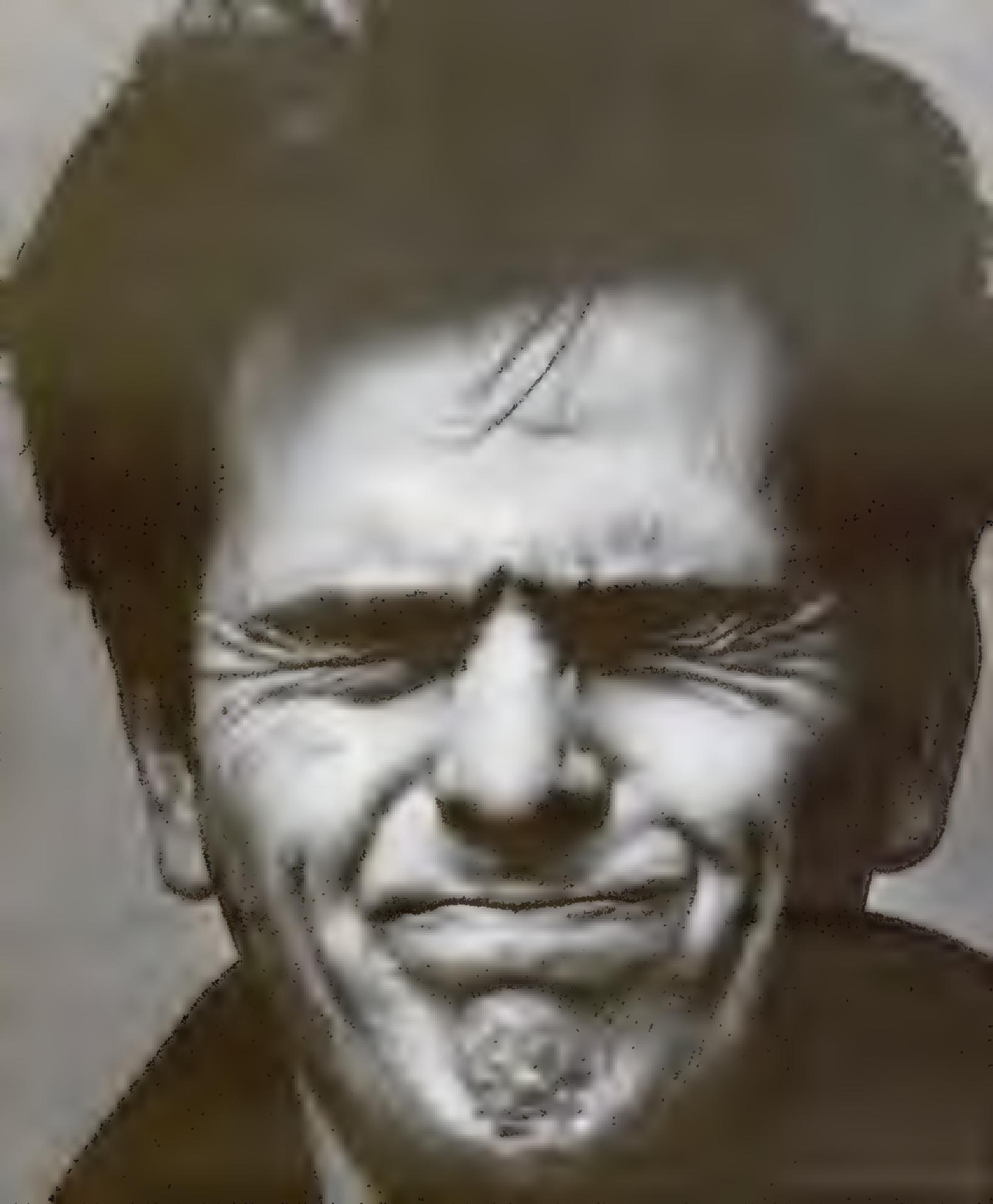
Art rarely has an opportunity to imitate domestic life with such medieval severity, but then there have been few passages in the rock annals to match the grievous rise of Peter Gabriel. He was born into an upper-middle-class British family in the semirural county of Surrey and educated at Charterhouse, the famed 17th century English "public school" named for the former Carthusian monastery in London in which it was first installed. The Charterhouse monks, not to mention the *Tom Brown's School Days*-styled headmasters that came after them, were of notoriously stern men. So it's not surprising that "thick, depressive, and pathetically unathletic" Peter Gabriel, as he remembers himself, was to burst straight from its gloomy "carrels" (private desk nooks) and Gothic dorms into the leadership of a stubbornly phantasmal band called Genesis.

Genesis was British pop's most intrepid purveyor of rock 'n' roll dramaturgy, and Peter Gabriel was its principal vocalist and ominously costumed Grand Guignol character. Gabriel would take the stage in fox-head masks, inverted pyramid headdresses, giant daffodil casques, glowing-eyes and bat-wings get-

Article by Timothy White

Photography by Anton Corbijn





ups, abstract Roman-helmet makeup, and eerie, silvery whiteface. Genesis's rambling compositions, with titles like "The Return of the Giant Hogweed" and "The Fountain of Salmacis," were brooding, mythical suites punctuated by Gabriel's lilt oboe tenor. One either adored the queer, dense, Lewis Carroll-like display or utterly disdained its precious, unfurled sense of detachment.

Following the elaborate 1974-'75 tour supporting the release of *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway*, Genesis's two-record rock opera of urban angst, Gabriel bowed out, murmuring that a series of personal and professional crises of confidence were overwhelming him. Drummer-singer Phil Collins took the helm in 1976 and he made it possible for the group to produce such commercial smashes as "Invisible Touch."

And Peter Gabriel, back from a year of creative solitude and domestic travails, is now the source of the adrenaline-fueled "Sledgehammer" from So, a stirring collection of neoteric Brit R&B spiced with elements of Nigerian highlife, Brazilian grooves, and Senegalese griots. Gabriel's solo presence has long since been stripped of all theatrical trappings and artifice, as was made apparent by his electrifying Amnesty International tour performance of "Biko" at the close of the "Conspiracy of Hope" Caravan at Giants Stadium, in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

He stood sentinel-like in high-collared, drab-orange shirt and midnight slacks, sweating profusely as his singing cut the still night with the sickening elegy to the slain South African poet-activist Steve Biko. "This is a song for a man of peace," Gabriel prefaced as his new band pounded out a soaring cadence "and it's dedicated to all the people of South Africa who've just been imprisoned in the last weekend."

The 55,000 in the stadium were left dumbstruck by the profoundly moving rendition.

"I feel empty and hollow now that this tour is done," Gabriel confided in a quiet moment after the show. "I miss the spirit we shared in the face of all the horrific pain the prisoners of conscience must face." One look at his elegantly lined features, the sad eyes fixed in a weary stare, and it was plain that this was a fellow who understood suffering.

Nice day to be a bird," assures Peter Gabriel, the man who composed the soundtrack to *Birdy*, director Alan Parker's stunning 1984 film adaptation of William Wharton's cult novel about a mentally and physically scarred Vietnam vet obsessed with birds and flight. As Gabriel offers the cheery comment, he shows a radiant but characteristically fidgeting grin and gazes out over the rooftops of London's sedate Chelsea section.

"*Birdy* was about the struggle of the spirit," says Gabriel. "It was about the interplay between the traumatized *Birdy*, the wounded victim, and his best friend, who's ostensibly the tough one. But in the end, it's *Birdy* who's strong and his friend who's cracking. When I saw the rough cut of the film, I knew I had to do it. It haunted me."

Gabriel takes a seat at a small writing desk in a cozy upstairs corner of his management office, tucked discreetly in the fashionable Walton Street shopping quarter where tony merchants like Savile-Edells and royal hatter John Boyd have their showrooms. It is a sunny day in May, and Gabriel looks as if it has arrived so early to gain his gratitude, as he speaks of the "eighteen months of torment" that overlapped with the start of recording for So.

"I was separated from my family," he says. A slight pause, and then he elects to go into detail. "This for me was a time of a lot of hurt, pain, and a lot of learning. I ended up in a couples' therapy group, which was a powerful, humbling experience. Jill and I were wed in 1971, but we still have a lot to discover and resolve in each other. When you're looking at other couples who've made a similar mess of things,

well, you see your problems much more easily on someone else's shoulders than you do on your own. You think, 'How can that guy do that, act like this— and then, 'Wait a moment! I'm doing that too!'

The separation was ultimately healed with the help of marriage counselor Robin Skinner, co-author with Monty Python's John Cleese of a recent book on relationships.

"I uncovered a lot," says Gabriel, "and it's in the songs on the new album like 'In Your Eyes.' On two recent trips to Senegal, it was explained to me that many of their love songs are left ambiguous so that they could refer to the love between man and woman or the love between man and God. That interested me, because in our society it's a little like the sacred versus the profane. You know, church music, for instance, expresses a religious type of love, and romantic love belongs to the Devil, if you like."

"So I began playing in the lyrics with a mixture of the two."

*In your eyes
I see the doorway to a thousand churches
In your eyes
The resolution of all the fruitless searches
In your eyes
I see the light and the heat
In your eyes
Oh, I want to be that complete*

"There was another song specifically about lust and spiritual love that I didn't make it onto the album," he continues. "It was called 'This Is the Road.' I haven't finished it. A few others follow by the wayside, songs that will probably surface later. One is 'Sagrada,' a working title after the Church of the Sagrada Familia, which Gaudi, the visionary architect, began building in Barcelona in 1884 and was obsessed with until his death in 1926. The song was an interplay between his way of building and that of a lady named Sarah Winchester. She was the heir to the Winchester rifle fortune who in San Jose, California, started building this enormous home because she was haunted by the ghosts of all the people who had been killed by the rifle. By her death in 1922, she'd added one hundred sixty rooms."

Gabriel's songs, both with Genesis and solo, are fraught with the themes of haunting, searching, and obsession; the potential solace and evil entrapments of religion; the sexualized attributes and sensual torments of love; and most of all, the terrible yet exhilarating nearness of madness.

"Music has always been therapy for me," says Gabriel. "At one point after the repressive Charterhouse, I was offered a place at the London School of Film Technique, but the choice was between that and Genesis. I went for the relative release of Genesis. 'I Know What I Like (In Your Wardrobe),' a song from *Selling England by the Pound* (1973), gives a good idea of the kind of themes I was keen on investigating musically."

"In it I was picturing a formal English scene in which characters were really battling it out. I was influenced by D. H. Lawrence in the way that he has these territorial skirmishes going on beneath the plot. In this case, the blades of a lawn mower were an instrument of violence within the peacefulness of a summer garden." He grins strangely, a furtive wrinkle. "In the English way of life, beneath the restraint, calmness, and poise, there's a seething animal waiting to get out."

Peter Gabriel was born at 4:30 PM on February 13, 1950, an Aquarian with his moon in Sagittarius. Weekend dairy farmer Ralph Cahine, an electrical engineer who did critical World War II radar tests, met his wife Irene, like him a scion of a large well-off Victorian family, while on a skiing trip in the 1940s.

Peter and younger sister Anne were raised on the



100-acre Deep Pool Farm in Woking, a commuter town of approximately 77,000 on the ancient River Wey. "It was an extremely modest village that grew up around a railway stop built on the open heath in 1838," he says. "Although it was thirty miles from London, it was completely untainted by the city, a world apart from the land of the living."

When Ralph Gabriel was not delivering calves he was a technician in research and development for the Rediffusion Company in Hastings, where he designed the first fiber-optic cable-TV system. Called Dial-a-Program, a prototype was installed for experimental purposes in the medical department of Case Western Reserve in Ohio.

"Unfortunately, the patents only lasted for fifteen years," says Gabriel, "and the potential of cable TV was hardly recognized at the time. A lot of brilliant study was not made use of or capitalized on—extremely frustrating for my father."

The senior Gabriel, who retired to the remaining 20 acres of the farm five years ago, was determined that his son cultivate a shrewdness he lacked. And so, like his father and grandfather, Peter was pulled out of the local preparatory academy and sent to Charterhouse in nearby Godalming, in September 1963.

The traditional "fagging" (humiliation and enslavement tactics by upperclassmen) of freshmen, as well as the institution's almshouse-meager meal schedule, were virtually unaltered from the day in 1885 when British essayist and old Carthusian Max Beerbohm pointed out the headmaster's wife's fine necklace with the quip, "Every pearl represents a boy's empty stomach."

Somehow, the pimpled Peter Gabriel was still able to add pudginess to his other physical flaws, drawing more than his share of the hazing and physical harassment. He received his first headmaster-administered "caning" (beating) at 16 for slipping off by train to nearby Godalming to meet his sweetheart and future wife Jill Moore, the 14-year-old daughter of the Queen's Private Secretary, Sir Philip Moore.

Back home in Woking, Gabriel's first acquaintance with rock 'n' roll was a radio tape he made of Johnny Kidd and the Pirates' "Red River Rock." But it was during an autumn 1963 trip with his parents to various Kent coastal resorts that the diffident schoolboy, daydreaming in the back of the car, was struck by the

thunderbolt that was the Beatles pealing "Please Please Me."

"I immediately bought a copy in a seaside shop," he says, still charged by the memory. "It triggered a tremendous personal awakening, a leap into a new realm. In no time I knew more than a hundred Beatles songs on piano, and classmate Tony Banks and I used to sneak off from Charterhouse to loiter around a shop called the Record Corner in Godalming. I also began playing the drums."

Gabriel and Banks started a "flower power" band called the Garden Wall. In the early summer of 1966 they formed a loose bond with guitarists Anthony Phillips and Mike Rutherford, members of another school combo called the Anon. Distracted from "hippie rock" by the sound of Stax-Volt soul, Peter moved on to drum in an R&B cover band called the Spoken Word. The shift in tastes had been occasioned by a taboo visit to the Ram Jam Club, the storied underground ska/R&B saloon in South London.

"I don't think there was a white face to be seen there but mine," says Gabriel, breaking into a beam, "and it was the best gig of my life as a spectator. Otis Redding was singing, with Wayne Jackson on trumpet, and that very night I found my heroes. Otis tore into 'Try a Little Tenderness,' and the rapport with the audience was extraordinary. I stood in the middle of the club, as close to the front as I could get without drawing attention to myself, and decided that I wanted to be a musician for life."

All consideration of higher education was shelved as the core of the defunct Garden Wall and the Anon combined in the winter of 1967 to become Genesis. The name was supplied by Jonathan King, another Charterhouse alumnus who'd rocked the school in 1965 by writing and singing a worldwide Top Ten single on Decca called "Everyone's Gone to the Moon." Soon afterward, King got a job as assistant to the head of Decca Records, and in a rock variation on the old-boys network he began grooming Genesis for the label. A Bee Gees-derived song by Gabriel and Banks, "The Silent Sun," was the first Decca release in February 1968. An album, *From Genesis to Revelation*, was issued 13 months later, but record buyers found the quasi-Biblical boast a bore and instead bought Cream's *Goodbye*.

In 1970, Genesis jumped to Charisma Records, the art-rock stable of the Nice and Lindisfarne. *Trespass* was recorded, and then lead guitarist Anthony Phillips quit. Ads in *Melody Maker* led to the hiring of guitarist Steve Hackett and drummer Phil Collins, who powered *Nursery Cryme* (1971) and *Fox Trot* (1972) to prosperous sales on the Continent. But the British music critics resented the largely privileged background of Genesis's lineup.

"In Eng and," Gabriel explains, "because rock 'n' roll is pretty tied up, like football, with working-class mythology, there's quite a lot of press resentment to any ambitions in rock by middle-class people. That was definitely something to battle with in the first few years."

There were also mounting clashes within the group as Gabriel emerged as the sole identity of Genesis's convoluted compositions. Then in 1975, he unexpectedly resigned from the group. It was a jolt to its ultra-loyal devotees, but Peter had planned the departure since the difficult birth of his daughter Anne in 1974. The womb-infected infant nearly died—"What came out was a green lump that was carried away to intensive care in silver foil, like chicken bones."

As the baby lingered on the critical list, Gabriel lost all interest in rock 'n' roll stardom. His band was faced with a leader who now detested the lavish acclaim they'd resented him for. Gabriel pulled the plug on the star-making machine and moved his family to the rural anonymity of the lush Bath valley.

The change in Gabriel was so extreme that some feared for his sanity. "Peter spent the first six months making a vegetable garden and appeared to be going mad," says his wife Jill. "He would come into the

"I respect Phil Collins. I think he's a natural musician who can sit down and play most things very well. We get on fine."

house and play the piano in a very alone world. But I could tell from the way he was playing that he had to go out on his own."

When Gabriel's solo LPs began to emerge, they revealed a harrowing flair for flinty introspection and doomsday conviction. Songs like "Solsbury Hill," a richly uplifting tale of the exhilarating loss of childhood innocence that was an allegory for the breakup of Genesis, were contrasted with apocalyptic keyboard soul-chillers like "Here Comes the Flood." Between 1977 and 1982 there were four separate solo offerings titled *Peter Gabriel*, each with artwork more sullen and unnerving than its predecessor. Happily, the records yielded hits, notably "Solsbury Hill," "D.I.Y.," "Games Without Frontiers," and "Shock the Monkey" but what in hell was transpiring behind the scenes?

A soothng copper glow is settling on central London as Gabriel fetches a piping hot spot of tea and gets comfortable in his Walton Street hideaway.

"I believe that you learn more from failing than from succeeding," he rules, intently regarding the wisps of steam swirling from his china cup. "Yet we have a built-in fear of failure, a shame of failure, which I think is pretty harmful. The thing with painful experiences is that you can handle them and bring them out, or you can bury them. In me there's a strong urge to bury them sometimes."

"For instance, looking back on my childhood, I always told myself it was a happy time, but it was actually a dreadful time, me hating and being frightened of school and my own loneliness, unable to ever sleep, feeling so isolated. What I'm interested in doing with my music is communicating relief from psychic pain, probably because I'm exploring it for myself. But there are those who argue that pain is also stored in the body."

"With mental pain there's the idea of catharsis, learnt in my realm of interest from the blues. When the blues singer sits there and pours out his heart he's purging his soul a little bit, and he's doing so for all the audience, who can sympathize and maybe get a little emotion out, too. I know that when I can get emotion out, I suddenly feel more alive, just as if I was pulsing with new blood in a way I simply don't when I try to suppress things."

Gabriel's first attempt at shedding his physical and mental armor was est. In the course of the controversial assertiveness training, he confronted the gnawing isolation he'd lived with since childhood, particularly the seemingly insurmountable distance he felt from his father, for whom he harbored both a huge unspoken admiration and a smoldering resentment for his lack of physical or verbal warmth. Despite all its detractors, est at least enabled Peter to hug his dad for the first time in more than a decade.

"He was a bit put off, initially," says Peter with an almost imperceptible tremor. "But I think we like and are comfortable with it now."

While there may be those who deem the current dearth of theatrical disguises in Gabriel's concerts to be a sign of a healthier self-image, he is not so quick to discount the mask's powerful ability to reveal.

"Often in our culture we look at a mask as a device to hide behind. But in many cultures—African, Indian—it's a device through which you can come out. In the traditional masked ball situation you have



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A QUESTION OF JUSTICE

While the largest task force in US history was looking for the Atlanta child murderer, a small, secret investigation may have found the killers and had to decide not to tell anyone. Is Wayne Williams innocent? A motion has been filed to reopen the case. The facts of the following story come from the volumes of court papers and police files our reporters went through, as well as their interviews with some of the key people involved.

Race war. In February 1981, officials of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation and various other law-enforcement agencies met in a downtown Atlanta office to discuss that devastating prospect. According to court papers, while a task force investigated the Atlanta child murders, another high-level and secret investigation discovered and covered up the fact that a Ku Klux Klan family may have been responsible for the murder of a young black boy and was possibly linked to the murders of 14 others in an attempt to ignite a race war between blacks and whites in the capital of the South.

Faced with this astonishing discovery, these officials, black and white, decided to attempt to avert a bloody cataclysm by keeping secret the evidence of this plot and effectively hindering the public investigation. Subsequently, his lawyers claim, Wayne Williams, was made a scapegoat—swept up in an investigation that had never centered on him—and rushed to conviction on the basis of evidence that was at best flimsy and at worst nonexistent. Overnight, Wayne Williams became the Atlanta Child Murderer and was sentenced to two consecutive life sentences. Meanwhile, the other investigation was quietly abandoned and incriminating evidence was destroyed.

While police scoured the ghettos, homosexual haunts, and psychiatric wards, according to the testimony of informants who were involved in Klan activity, members of the Sanders family in the backwoods just outside Atlanta carried out their plan to execute one black boy each month while arming themselves with high-powered rifles, fragmentation grenades, and various disguises for the urban war they expected to foment.

According to these informants, 30-year-old Charles Sanders was incensed when 14-year-old Lubie Geter backed a go-cart into his car. Sanders swore: "I'm gonna kill that black bastard. I'm gonna strangle him with my dick." Several weeks later, Geter was found dead, strangled to death in a wooded area in the city. Shortly after, Sanders's brother Don was heard on a wiretap to tell another Klan brother that he was going out to look for "another little boy."

Article by Robert Keating and Barry Michael Cooper

This evidence, withheld from Williams's defense team during the now famous trial, forms the basis for the petition to reopen the case, which has been made by activist lawyers William Kunstler and Ron Kuby. They are being assisted by Harvard Law professor Alan Dershowitz, whose brilliant legal work laid the foundation for Claus Von Bulow's successful appeal. The team of Kunstler, Kuby, and Dershowitz expects to show that Wayne Williams was unjustly, illegally, and unconstitutionally charged with two but implicated in all the brutal slayings of some 30 young blacks in Atlanta from 1979 through 1981.

The Atlanta child murders case is not over. The story of what happened in Atlanta five years ago is about to be rewritten.

One day last summer, Lynn Whatley, Wayne Williams's new lawyer, received an anonymous package. Inside was a handwritten transcript that astonished and frightened him. Whatley was stunned as he read through the pages. They contained a conversation between Klansmen about the death of young Lubie Geter—a conversation that might prove the key to unlocking the mystery of who killed 29 young black children in the streets of Atlanta.

One Friday night in July 1979, Edward Smith said goodnight to his friends at a skating rink and disappeared. Around the same time, 13-year-old Alfred Evans bounded out the front door of his house to go to a kung fu movie, caught a ride from a neighbor, was dropped off at a bus stop, and was never heard from again. Several weeks later, a woman walking along Huskey Lake Road in southwest Atlanta looking for discarded bottles and cans saw a human leg. When police arrived on the scene, they found the bodies of not one but two teenage boys—Alfred Evans and Edward Smith.

Over the next year, 10 more children, ranging in age from 9 to 14, were found dead, mutilated and sexually abused.

The relentless killing of Atlanta's young kids gripped the city in fear and hysteria. The summertime ritual of children playing in the streets turned solemn and cautious.

On July 7, 1980, the Atlanta Bureau of Police Services (ABPS) joined with other federal, state, and local law-enforcement agencies to form the Special Task Force on Missing and Murdered Children—the largest task force in the history of the United States. Despite the combined efforts of over 400 law-enforcement officers, the murders continued. By December, the total was 18 young black children dead or listed as missing. Enraged by the suspicion that whites were responsible, packs of armed black vigilantes began patrolling the city's housing projects. City officials were helpless as the tensions grew out of control.

On January 3, 1981, 14-year-old Lubie Geter disappeared. His body was found a month later in a wooded area. Dog hairs were found on his body. The cause of death was listed as strangulation. His genitals, lower pelvic area, and both feet were missing. An eyewitness claimed she had seen him getting into a car with a tall white man with a jagged scar on his neck.

A month after Geter's body was found, a police informant identified by the code name "B.J. Jones" phoned his contact in the ABPS's intelligence division and said that he had information about the child murders, particularly the killing of Lubie Geter.

The call stunned his contact, Jones, who had a strong record of providing reliable information, had been one of their best informants for 18 years. He said that in 1978 or '79 he had met Charles Theodore Sanders, a member of the Ku Klux Klan, a narcotics dealer, and a drug user, who attempted to recruit Jones into the Klan because of his expertise with explosives. The Klan, Sanders told Jones, was attempting to create an uprising among blacks in Atlanta by murdering black children. Sanders said the Klan was also killing black adults, but not in Atlanta. He wanted Jones's help in



One day last summer, Wayne Williams's lawyer received an anonymous package that astonished and frightened him.



committing more murders of Atlanta's black children.

Jones dismissed Sanders's boasting as Klan bravado and bottled-up bitterness until the summer of 1980, when he and Sanders visited the home of a man named Odell Simpson, one of Sanders's friends. As Sanders parked his car across the street from Simpson's home, Lubie Geter and another boy, Earl Lee Tyrell, were playing with Simpson's son. Geter accidentally ran into Sanders's car with his go-cart.

A few months later, Jones and Sanders were together again when Sanders spotted Geter and said, "See that black bastard? I'm going to get him. I'm going to choke the black bastard to death with my dick."

On January 3, 1981, Lubie Geter disappeared from the Atlanta Mall. Shocked by the disappearance, Jones went to Simpson's house and told the man's young son not to go anywhere without his father—with anyone. A month later, Lubie Geter's body was found. On Geter's body were found dog hairs thought to belong to a Siberian husky. At the trial, the prosecution did not reveal that Charles Sanders owned a Siberian husky.

Major Herman Griner, head of the Special Investigations section of the Atlanta Bureau of Police Services, was given B.J. Jones's report on February 19, 1981. That day, Griner wrote to Superior Court Judge Tom Pope, requesting that B.J. Jones, who had in the meantime been arrested on an unspecified charge, be released because he had "provided intelligence which is extremely important" to the investigation of Atlanta's murdered and missing children. With that, the

Klan investigation now took off in earnest, with Jones agreeing to recontact Sanders, often while wearing a transmitter and body recorder.

A few days later, investigators, recognizing a shortage of information on the Klan, began to process more information on the various klaverns—among them the National States Rights Party/New Order of Ku Klux Klan, to which Charles Sanders and several members of his family belonged. One of five Klan groups active in the state of Georgia, the National States Rights Party was small but rapidly building, due mostly to its strong advocacy of violence. It drew the more vicious members from other groups, and it was the most active klavern in Atlanta. Klan leaders promised a race war was coming in 1981 and urged their members to arm themselves. According to Special Agent Darrell Adams, training camps for Klansmen were being set up to teach guerrilla warfare. Meanwhile, in Atlanta's black communities, some blacks were pressuring others to arm themselves, according to a report SPIN has obtained. A "confidential intelligence" source using the name "Rex" attended meetings in several communities at which some blacks urged that they all arm themselves. There was talk of moving weapons into Atlanta by the truckload.

On February 26, Police Services investigators were sure that the extremely volatile racial situation in At-

Top: Maynard Jackson, mayor of Atlanta during the killings. Below: Sharon Glenn with picture of her brother Billy Barret, one of the victims.

lanta was about to explode. They feared that if the Klan investigation was turned over to the Metro Task Force, which was plagued by leaks, the news of the Klan's role in the killing of black children would lead to a war in the streets of Atlanta.

A meeting was called in the early morning of February 27 at the Georgia Bureau of Investigation in Atlanta, attended by Phil Peters, director of the GBI, Major Griner of ABD-SIS; Inspector R. Hambrick, Lieutenant Bob Ingram, Assistant Director Tom McGreevy, and Special Agent Adams of GBI; and Lieutenant Sam Hazel of ABD-SIS.

Griner had already received information that five of the murdered children knew each other: Lubie Geter, Aaron Wyche, Aaron Jackson, Jr., Darren Glass, and Curtis Walker. The special committee was faced with an astounding realization. If these five boys knew one another, then Charles Sanders could also have known all of them.

Peters emphasized how sensitive the investigation was and how necessary that these discoveries not be revealed outside the committee. This bunker mentality led to the remarkable situation whereby two investigations into the murders were being conducted simultaneously, one unaware of the other. While the public investigation, mired in chaos and disorganization, pursued wild leads, employed psychics, entertained fantastic theories, and suffered from the ineptitude in its ranks, the secret investigation—run by a committee of sober professionals trying to avert a race war—focused very sharply and efficiently on its subject, the Ku Klux Klan and the violent Sanders family.

In a calm, dispassionate atmosphere, the committee weighed all of the factors and consequences. They agreed on very streamlined organization. Staying away from the headlines, they relied on the discreet tactics of sophisticated electronic surveillance, the savvy of confidential informants, and stakeouts. Without the pressure of trying to find a mass murderer, they gathered evidence step by step to help secure court-ordered wiretaps.

The focus of the investigation was the Sanders family. There were seven members of the family, with extensive criminal records, including Sondra, Charles's wife, who had been convicted on narcotics charges. Collectively, they have a criminal history that stretches back 35 years and includes convictions for child molestation, murder, burglary, assault and battery, narcotics, and drunk driving.

According to the police, they are the epitome of a violent, bigoted, southern Klan family. The patriarch is Carlton Sanders. Since 1951, when he was arrested on suspicion of molestation, a charge later dropped, he has acquired a string of more than 35 arrests for everything from simple assault to wife beating. Of average height and slight build, he is simian in appearance, with sunken jaws, heavy lids, and a low forehead.

Carlton Sanders has another distinct physical characteristic, a jagged scar on the left side of his neck, the same type of scar Ruth Warren mentioned in her description of Lubie Geter's presumed kidnapper.

The GBI committee met on March 5, 1981, to hear Peters reveal he had developed another Klan informant who had told him "he liked kids and did not like what the Klan was doing in Atlanta." Two days later, one of the informants met with Jerry Sanders and a Klan brother of Charles and Don and heard one of them reveal that after killing 20 black children, the Klan was going to start killing black women. The committee stepped up its investigation, poring over Charles's telephone records to verify what it was getting from its second informant. The informants, meanwhile, fed more and more information tying the Sanders family to the killings. According to the informant, identified in documents as "CI-899," "Don Sanders had direct knowledge of who was responsible for the

killings."

On March 4, the committee's wiretap recorded a late-night phone conversation that made them shudder. Charles Sanders was overheard negotiating the sale of M16 rifles at a cost of \$25 each and fragmentation grenades at \$50 a case.

"If you threw that motherfucker into a crowd it would have to be someone you really wanted to get," said Charles.

"Yeah," said the other voice, "I suppose the Klan does shit like that."

"Yoo hoo," answered Charles.

On March 5, the committee decided to begin closing the net.

On March 2, 15 year old Joseph (Jo Jo) Bell disappeared after leaving his job at a seafood restaurant called Cap'n Peg on Georgia Avenue on the edge of the sprawling McDaniel Glen Housing Project. Jo Jo showed up a few days later at a friend's house on Gray Street. According to a police report, there Bell met his good friend Stanley Parker, who said, "One day I went by Tom Terrell's house, and when I walked in, Tom Terrell and another dude that was in the house was arguing. Jo Jo Bell was sitting on the couch. When I walked in, he said, 'Hi, Stanley,' and I asked him what was Tom Terrell and that dude fighting about. He said he didn't know and got up and left. A little while later, Jo Jo Bell comes back running. He was breathing hard, and I asked him what was wrong. He said, 'Man, it feels like somebody is following me.' Jo Jo Bell went on to tell Stanley that "a white dude and a black dude were parked on the corner of Kennedy or Gray Street—he couldn't remember which one—in a black and brown car. The white dude opened up the car door and told Jo Jo to get in. Jo Jo ran back to Tom Terrell's house, trying to get away from the dudes. I told Jo Jo, 'Come on man, let's get together.' Jo Jo said no, and he went out running through the back of Tom Terrell's house, and that was the last time that I saw Jo Jo Bell." Stanley Parker stated that when he got home and looked at the 5:30 news, he saw that Jo Jo Bell was missing.

The following evening the phone rang at Cap'n Peg

On January 3, 1981, 14-year-old Lubie Geter disappeared. His body was found a month later with both feet missing.



Right: Eldrin Bell, deputy police chief at the time.



Bettman Newsphotos

Above: Wayne Williams (cuffed) leaving the Atlanta jail August 17, 1981, to face arraignment on murder charges of two black males in their 20s. He was never charged with any of the child murders, although the case was closed upon his conviction

Jerry Lee, the assistant manager, answered "This is Jo Jo," said the voice on the phone. "They're about to kill me. I'm about dead, they are about to kill me. Jerry, they're about to kill me." Then the phone went dead.

Nine days later, Jo Jo's best friend, 13-year-old Timmy Hill, also disappeared. Timmy Hill's young life had been ravaged in the week leading up to his disappearance. A few days earlier, he'd gone with a buddy to set up a ripoff of a Salvation Army post, only to get raped by a Salvation Army security guard who kept asking the two boys if they had any idea who was killing black children in Atlanta. On the night of March 13, another friend saw him dodging his way down Gray Street, talking live about having been grabbed and how there wasn't going to be any grabber getting him. The next day, Timmy Hill disappeared.

The next evening yet another mysterious phone call came into the Cap'n Peg Restaurant, this one from a woman, sounding white and somewhere in her 30s. Her man was dangerous, she said, Jo Jo Bell was different from the other kids who had been murdered because she liked him and was trying to have him released. Don't call the police, she said, if they did, he'd kill her, too.

Timmy Hill was found dead of strangulation on March 30 in the Chattahoochee River. Jo Jo Bell would be found dead of strangulation in the South River three weeks later.

The discovery of Timmy Hill's body had dramatically different effects on the two investigations. Stunned by the new murder, the task force investigation became even more panicked. Evidence was being lost, murder sites were being tampered with, conflicting coroners reports were being filed.

However, the secret investigation continued apace, and in the latter part of March, it widened its scope to unlimited taps on the phones of Donald and Terry Sanders. On April 1, the following conversation between Terry and Don Sanders was intercepted:

TS: Hello?
DS: Hey.

**The voice on the phone was Jo Jo's.
"They're about to kill me!" he screamed.
"I'm about dead. They're about to kill me!"**

TS: Yeah.
DS: What's the good word?
TS: I just don't know. What are you doing?
DS: Ah, there ain't nothing to it.
TS: Uh.



Russell Baltazar, dazed after learning of his son's death on local TV news

DS: Is Ricky around?
TS: Well, he just left with Kenneth.
DS: D d he?
TS: Yeah.
DS: Where's he headed?
TS: To his apartment or something . . .
DS: Do you think he'll be back?
TS: Oh, yeah.
DS: After a while.
TS: Yeah.
DS: I'll just give a buzz back, and I might get out and ride around a little bit, and I might come by there.
TS: Go find you another little kid, another little kid?
DS: Yeah, scope out some places. We'll see you later.

When two caucasian hairs were removed from the underclothes of the fifteenth victim, Charles Stephens, who was found murdered in a trailer park in East Point, Georgia, that was frequently visited by the Sanders brothers, the secret investigation shifted toward gathering fiber and hair evidence from the vehicles used by the Sanders brothers and from Charles Sanders's husky dog. To get hair samples from the dog, investigators claimed they were from a health agency and said they had come to take the dog away for shots. Lab tests were done on the dog hairs and carpet fibers, but the results were apparently inconclusive.

As the evidence against the Sanders family grew and the climate in Atlanta turned nastier, the task force investigation continued, unaware of the progress being made by the committee. But even as it narrowed in on the Sanders family, the committee's uneasiness over the meaning of its discoveries turned into fear that the discovery that the Klan was behind the murders would trigger, not avert, racial unrest in the city.

After a series of meetings, the various members of the committee decided to terminate the secret investigation and seal its findings.

A short time after, Wayne Williams, a brash, cocky, young Atlanta hustler, became the primary suspect in the task force investigation. On June 4, after he reportedly had been spotted by agents staking out a Chattahoochee River bridge, Williams was arrested and charged with the murders of two men, Nathaniel Cater and Jimmy Ray Payne, whose bodies were found in or near the river. The evidence that would lead to his indictment was rug fibers, reportedly found on the bodies, that authorities said matched a rug in Williams's car.

The pace was beginning to crush Mary Welcome. Since the day that Wayne Williams had called her out of the blue, because of the notoriety she had gained as a city official who had closed down porno theaters on Peachtree Street, Welcome had found herself buried under the crush of paperwork, motions, appearances, briefs, and demands by the media, the court, her client, and her client's family. The Williams case wasn't just tough, it was impossible. For though Wayne Williams was not charged with the murder of any children (the two victims in the case he stood trial for were 21 and 25), she would be defending him against the common impression and, more important, the common belief that he was the Atlanta child murderer. Atlanta had a need to believe. And Mary Welcome—young, tough, and gifted—was about to confront a force greater than law.

Atlanta. It's mothers of murdered sons. It's government officials trying to contain a tense racial climate. It's police, woefully inept, and needing a conviction to save their shattered ego and image. So from the outset, Mary Welcome's defense of Wayne Williams was against all odds. Recognizing this, she brought in a Mississippi lawyer named Al Binder, himself a gifted courtroom gymnast. Williams's defense deteriorated because of the forces, legal and emotional, that began to work against them.

Immediately, the case was moved up on the court calendar, leaving Welcome and Binder very little time

to prepare fully. Soon they discovered that the judge would let the prosecution refer to—and, by association, accuse Williams of—the murders of 10 Atlanta boys. At the same time, the judge denied all but one of Welcome's motions intended to delay the trial's start. With the governor threatening to replace the prosecutor if he didn't move things along faster, and the FBI and even Vice President George Bush exerting their powerful influences to move things along, the defense was in trouble. The defense's attempt to investigate many of the leads and loose ends in the prosecution's case in hopes of finding the real killer had to be abandoned in the face of the need now to defend Williams against an avalanche of unrelated charges.

The extraordinary fact of Williams's case is that the evidence against him came down to a few strands of fiber that the prosecution claimed were found on the bodies of the two victims and matched a rug in Williams's car and a blanket in his home.

While such fiber evidence is commonplace in criminal trials, it is rarely the linchpin of any case, in that fibers are notoriously unreliable in connecting anyone to anything. And yet they were essentially the evidence upon which Wayne Williams would be convicted. But there was other tainted testimony and evidence.

Take the testimony of Ruth Warren and Darryl Davis, who claimed they had seen young murder victim Lubie Geter (who Williams was accused by implication, not directly, of murdering) getting in a car with Williams shortly before he disappeared. In her original testimony, Warren had identified the man with Geter as having a two-inch zig-zag scar on his neck under his left ear, resembling jagged lightning. Yet Wayne Williams has no such scar. During the trial, Davis testified that he had seen Williams with Lubie Geter at an Atlanta mall, but the prosecution failed to reveal that in an earlier statement to police, Davis stated that the man he saw with Geter was six feet tall and had a moustache and goatee. Which is not a description of Wayne Williams.

The prosecution also founded part of its case on dog hairs that were discovered on a number of the victims, both the two victims that Williams was standing trial for murdering and some of the 10 other murdered young boys whose cases were used in the trial to demonstrate a pattern to Williams's actions. This dog hair evidence, too, was highly erratic and hardly substantial. Originally, the forensic studies indicated that they were from a husky like the Sanders dog but with the opening of the investigation into Wayne Williams came the conclusion that the hairs might match his German shepherd as well.

The great travesty of the Williams trial, and the least defensible, was the court's allowing the prosecution to connect the murders of 10 Atlanta boys to the Williams case. In effect, Williams was being tried for crimes that he was never charged with. The mere act of connecting him at all to the murders of these children was sufficient evidence to convince a city desperately in need of a salve for its great pain. It was a shabby trampling of the Constitution, not so far removed from the kind of posse or vigilante justice that supposedly passed away a long time ago.

Unable to discover evidence admissible in court to bring charges against Williams for these murders, the prosecution instead came through the back door, charging him with two murders for which there were no witnesses, no weapons recovered, no fingerprints discovered, and then linking him to 29 other murders for which the prosecution had even less evidence. But if there's a greater injustice done to Wayne Williams, it is that evidence that may have exonerated him, or at least given him a chance to prepare an adequate defense, was denied him.

That is William Kunstler's argument. It is an old American principle, he says, called due process. And Kunstler's challenge to the Williams conviction is founded on his charge that in preventing Williams from knowing that others were suspected of the same



Enraged by the suspicion that whites were responsible for the 18 murders of black boys, packs of armed black vigilantes patrolled the city's housing projects.

Above: Don, Henry, and Marcus Evans with victim Alfred Evans's picture. Left: PJ. Leumel

crimes and that there was perhaps greater evidence against them, he was denied another basic right: the right to a fair trial. In his petition to have the trial reopened, Kunstler states that had the prosecution produced the material gathered by the committee's secret investigation, Williams could have demonstrated, among other things, that he was "framed by Atlanta officials attempting to solve both the child murders and preserve peace at the same time."

But suppose that Wayne Williams is innocent, then what? It's hard to imagine the effect of his being exonerated. It is inconceivable what the aftermath might be. One, however, gets a sense of it by being in Atlanta, on the streets among the poor, among the mothers who lost their sons and daughters to the crimes that are his cross. This is not a good life, each day is a search for distractions, not television but out on the streets, at the Omni, in the parks, and everywhere, these kids live as if Wayne Williams were out there anyway. Not everyone thinks he was guilty. And if he was, the killings have stayed a part of life, all the same. Life as a victim hasn't changed in the projects that skirt the center of Atlanta, and sometimes answers are better than justice. There are a lot of mothers who just want to finally know—about the killer or killers.

One boy, who knew a number of the murdered boys, has nightmares in which he sees his best friend's death, each time a different way—by strangulation, by gunshot, by stabbing. And then he's left with one image—of a man, always the same man, with long hair, a beard, and scary eyes.

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people behaving a lot more bravely than usual. That's not an artificial part of their personality but rather an integral part of their persona that's been allowed a doorway through the mask."

This also implies that Gabriel may use makeup and costumes again.

"Oh sure," he says, nodding vigorously. "I'm also intrigued with projected images in performance, as I was in the Genesis days, and I'm looking into the possibilities of more of a visual show for the next time out. When I see someone like Laurie Anderson, with whom I co-wrote 'This is the Picture (Excellent Birds)' [a bonus track on the tape and CD of *So*], her effective use of media makes me itch a bit."

"I like some of the showmanship and gimmicks of rock 'n' roll, whether it's Chuck Berry's duck walk, Pete Townshend's flailing arms, or the Sex Pistols' antipromotion. I've heard TV producer Jack Good telling how excited he was when Gene Vincent first came to this country to do his television show, and instead of this dark rock 'n' roll monster, coming off the plane was a very polite southern gentleman with a very slight limp. Good then persuaded him to dress in leather and exaggerate the limp. It struck me as an early example of rock 'n' roll myth-making, however contrived, but I like all that."

If personal and artistic emergence from his shell are Gabriel's primary goals, what was the intention behind the generic album titling—which was relinquished only in the States with the naming of the fourth solo album *Security*?

"First of all, it wasn't my intention to name the album *Security*, but rather that of the record company," he notes with enduring exasperation. "I originally thought I would avoid titles and make my records like magazines. When you look at home at a pile of magazines, you remember them usually by the picture on the cover; I wanted it to look like a body of work."

"However, in its wisdom, Geffen Records didn't appreciate this particular line of marketing and was concerned about possible loss of sales to label competitors—Atlantic and Mercury—which had also released records entitled *Peter Gabriel*. It was made plain to me that if I wanted the record released, they wanted a title. In 1982 I issued the helpfully named *Peter Gabriel Plays Live* album."

"Now, the new record has a universal title so that people won't end up buying the same record twice. I'm quite happy that that's happened, because there's a little change in style—I wanted the album to be elemental, alive, unselfconscious."

During this period of awakening and self-discovery, Gabriel had any especially humbling professional experiences that made him confront his possible limitations as a communicator?

"As an artist there was a time, which any performer dreads, when I was booted offstage." He winces, then bursts into laughter. "This only happened to me once, but it was while opening for Frank Zappa in Berlin in 1980, and it was an audience order than my usual audience."

"I think they thought, 'Who is this arrogant little shit getting up and doing these stunts?' I was coming on strong, mind you, because when I get hostile I probably always come on stronger. But I made myself vulnerable, too, to see if there was any possibility that it would allow a change of mood. It didn't work."

"People were throwing stuff at me, wanted to punch me. There was a guy yelling, 'ENGLISH PIG, GO HOME!' I crawled back up onstage and started to do 'Here Comes the Flood,' which was literally the quietest number I had at that point, and that didn't work either. I walked off."

He sighs heavily. "It was my worst night ever as a performer. Up until then I'd always been afraid of it happening. Now it had happened. Once the hurt and shock wore off, I began to adopt a different frame of mind. After a day's break, the next show was in Bremen with Zappa, and even though it wasn't going over again, I felt relaxed, intact. I began laughing and



"Part of what we consider our fundamental rock 'n' roll heritage originated in Africa. Period."

feeling at home, and the crowd responded. In the end, we did much better—it still wasn't fantastic—but I'd overcome my fear of being challenged, of being rejected by an audience."

Gabriel also let go of petty studio phobias about his work. On Phil Collins's *Hello, I Must Be Going!*, Collins had peddled himself to the groundbreaking gated drum sound Gabriel and engineer Hugh Padgham had perfected for Gabriel's third solo effort. Critics remarked that Collins had stolen Gabriel's new signature. And some were surprised to note that Peter sang backup on Collins's recent "Take Me Home" singe.

"I respect Phil," Gabriel says tensely. "I think he's a natural musician who can sit down and play most things very well. There's respect between us, and we'll be happy to do odd pieces together."

Questions of undue borrowing and the sharing of creative credit inevitably lead to larger issues in the careers of Gabriel, Collins, and other white rockers blatantly influenced by modern funk and African pop.

"For any of us musicians who get ideas from other cultures, we get accused of cultural imperialism," says Gabriel. "There are things like the Bo Diddley rhythm that I've heard beat-for-beat in Congolese patterns. Part of what we consider our fundamental rock 'n' roll heritage originated in Africa. Period. If you look at any school of music or art, it steals ruthlessly from anything that excites it. That's a pretty natural process."

"A, I think it's important to digest it a little rather than imitate it. B, I think if there is a lack of balance, people like me have a responsibility to provide it. At the 1982 World of Music, Arts, and Dance Festival I organized it was exciting to have Burundi drummers playing with Echo and the Bunnymen, Indian dan-

cers with the English Beat, Chinese opera with Simple Minds and myself—real mixture. Some of the rock 'n' roll cynics at the time said there was no way audiences would take this, we'd get booted and have bottles thrown, but nothing of the sort occurred."

"I'm still seeking out African talent myself. I got Youssou N'dour, the Senegalese singer who's a Bob Marley-type figure in his own country, into my Bath studios for 'In Your Eyes'; I think he deserves a much wider audience. And I'm pleased to see that in most record stores in England and the States you see an African section now, the way there was a reggae section ten years ago. Maybe in another decade there'll be a world-music section."

"Music is one of the ways that can combat racism and some of the other divisions between the First and Third Worlds, and rock has gotten richer for it."

"What we're seeing at the moment reminds me in some ways of the 1960s, but it is a lot more practical. The social engagement of rock musicians is positive, although I don't think we can change the world as directly as many people thought was once possible. What we can do is provide information and then let people make up their minds. It seems to me that the 'Sun City' project, which I think was very well done helped—along with news broadcasts—to ignite an awareness in the States of the South African situation. It was a chain of influences. But I don't want to be preached at all the time by entertainers."

Nonetheless, there are urgent messages, subtle and unsable, on such *So* songs as "Don't Give Up," Gabriel's heart tugging duet with Kate Bush, and "Mercy Street."

"True, true," says Gabriel, sipping the last of his tea. "The sensitive treatment Kate gave our give-and-take on that song was gratifying, because it's not just a song about a woman supporting a man in a demanding relationship. The chief thing dragging them down is unemployment, which is presently tearing the social fabric of Thatcher's England apart. The catalyst for 'Don't Give Up' was a photograph I saw by Dorothea Lange, inscribed 'In This Proud Land,' which showed the dust-bowl conditions during the Great Depression in America. Without a climate of self-esteem, it's impossible to function."

"'Mercy Street' was inspired by the book of poetry and an unpublished play of the same name written by Anne Sexton, the troubled American housewife-turned-writer who, at around age 28, began writing what would become the collection *To Bedlam and Part Way Back*. A doctor in a mental hospital suggested that she write partly as therapy."

In 1974, Sexton committed suicide at age 46. It's been said that we have art in order that we not die from the truth. Certainly this was Anne Sexton's shattered gospel.

"When I discovered her work by chance in a bookstore," says Gabriel, "I was struck that, unlike most writers, who are conscious of their peers or the audience, she was writing entirely for herself. 'Mercy Street' is filled with the messages and imagery of dreams, and a constant search for a suitable father figure, whether it be a doctor, a priest, or God. That search kept her alive longer than many around her, perhaps thought she could bear, gave her life meaning, and now her work gives hope to others. That's a kind of magic, I think. Creation as therapy, both the fact and the gentle endorsement of that, is a thread in the material on *So*."

June 4, 1986, backstage at San Francisco's Cow Palace, 8:45 PM. Peter Gabriel, dressed in a dark smock over a light-blue shirt and billowy black slacks, is a nervous wreck. Knitting his hands and stalking about as a concerned-looking Sting watches from a discreet distance, he seems to be in the throes of a severe anxiety attack. Sting steps over to put a boyishly soothing hand on his shoulder, whispering a few cracks into his ear.

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SYMPATHY FOR THE DEVIL

"Dealing with the devil" almost sounds harmless, but what it really means is nothing short of horrific. Our continuing investigation into relief aid abuse in Ethiopia.

Article by Robert Keating

The reign of terror began on the eve of May Day, 1977. In Ethiopia's national palace, ringed by tall walls and hard-faced black men, the decision was made. Outside, young students flowed through the streets and the back alleys toward the center of the capital, where thousands were gathering for a protest rally against the government.

At the same time, at an outlying military barracks, soldiers loaded their high-powered rifles and machine guns onto large canvas-covered trucks, climbed aboard, and headed toward the center of town.

In the main square, the crowds, now swollen to many thousands, listened to speeches and slogans and shouted loudly about the freedom that comes from revolution. No one saw the trucks with the soldiers as they drew near. Suddenly, the trucks rolled to a stop, the canvas flaps flew back, and the soldiers poured out. Before anyone could react, the machine guns and rifles spat a dull, deadly tattoo, riddling the crowd as screams of liberation turned to screams of despair. When the assault was over, 500 students and children lay dead.

For days afterward the streets of Addis Ababa were empty except for the bodies of young students and children on which the soldiers hung signs that read, "I am dead because I am a counterrevolutionary."

Corpses of pregnant women had the words "I gave birth to a contra" carved in their bellies. Parents had to purchase the bodies of their children back from the government for the inflated cost of however many bullets it took to kill them.

For weeks following, some 100 to 150 children were slaughtered nightly. "One thousand children have been massacred in Addis Ababa and their bodies, lying on the streets, are ravaged by roving hyenas," declared the Secretary General of the Swedish Save the Children Fund. "The bodies of murdered children, mostly aged 11 to 13 years, can be seen heaped at the roadside when one leaves Addis."



At one intensive feeding center, relief workers were forced to stand just meters away while 3,000 children lay dying of starvation.

In the few months that followed, another 5,000 Ethiopians were arbitrarily executed, bringing the toll of Chairman Mengistu Haile Miriam's rise to power to more than 30,000 in three short years.

Mengistu's brutal pattern of bold executions and merciless torture continues to this day.

"Mengistu rose to power on the bodies of his comrades," says Dan Connell of Grassroots International, a relief agency. "He consolidated his power on the bodies of the students during the Red Terror. And he maintains it on the bodies of the peasant population today."

Observes another source: "This guy's presided over more deaths than Idi Amin."

Meanwhile, across this ravaged and apparently godforsaken land travel the politicians and entertainers who have granted to the people of Ethiopia some of their time to solve a "glamorous" crisis while ignoring or remaining silent in the presence of tragedy.

While Bob Geldof, Senator Ted Kennedy, Jesse Jackson, Lionel Richie, and others waver over what the real issues are in Ethiopia, Chairman Mengistu runs the most vicious government on the planet, a criminal empire that this year was given the lowest rating for human rights in a comprehensive book just published by *The Economist*.

Mengistu has turned mass murder on May Day into an Ethiopian tradition. On May 1, 1979, for example, more than 100 political prisoners from the province of Oromo were marched out of their cells and "machine gunned to death by soldiers and their bodies displayed in public," according to Amnesty International. Similar killings continued the following day.

Security officers routinely shot and killed people in their homes, whether or not the contraband they looked for, such as illegal weapons or publications, was found. Children at an Addis school were gunned down as their parents demonstrated for the release of their other offspring. Soldiers are granted a license to kill and handed a list of hundreds of names with photographs of "wanted persons." Sometimes, instead of leaving the "I am a contra" sign on a body, soldiers place one that reads, "Mistaken identity."

Religion has been outlawed and worshippers punished. Church members, priests, and ministers rot in jail, while soldiers have machine gunned blindly into crowded mosques.

One night in March 1978, soldiers knocked on the door of a holy man and took away his 14-year-old son without explanation. According to a reporter for *The Times* of London who was in Addis, "They returned his body after four hours, disfigured by torture, the eyes gouged out, and the body burned by electric shock."

So while rock star Geldof casually refers to "making deals with the devil," Mengistu tortures and murders his own people and shows amply what dealing with the devil means.

Mengistu has as many enemies as there are people who fear him—and that is most of Ethiopia. The bastard son of an Ethiopian aristocrat and his former slave, he isn't a member of the ruling Amhara nation, which made his sudden rise to power especially surprising to his comrades. "Many of them," says one Ethiopian, "have been surprised to their graves."

A graduate of Ethiopia's one-year military school—rather than its prestigious West Point-like four-year academy as were many of his comrades—Mengistu's insatiable appetite for power is perhaps rooted in his lower class "lesser-citizen" status. From all accounts,

he is an imposing though rather slight man, guided by this monster within. The target of several assassination attempts, today he moves about inside a constant ring of heavily armed security men. Peasants in Addis Ababa often say that he literally lives inside a tank.

Mengistu was a 32-year-old army captain when in 1974 he became part of a committee of 120 junior officers formed to demand salary increases from Emperor Haile Selassie. The Dergue, as the committee was called, quickly turned into a rebellion and overthrew Selassie in September 1974 in a bloodless coup. Mengistu, it is said, completed the revolt by suffocating the frail deposed leader with a pillow. He has proven to be especially talented at revolutionary politics. Fancying himself a Bolshevik, after taking power he began assassinating the other members of the Dergue in Wild West style or had them executed. Today, out of the 120 original members, only seven have survived.

Among the assassinations was the bold murder in his office of Mengistu's co-chairman on the Dergue. Shootouts in the hallways of the capital's political buildings became frequent. Thousands of opponents were thrown into the damp, dark, freezing cold wine cellars of the old Menelik Palace. It was there in early 1977 that Mengistu sprung a trap on the growing coterie within the Dergue who wanted to have him arrested. On February 2, in one move, he wiped out all of his leading opponents in a spectacular mass execution. This moment turned into the bloody Red Terror and a l that has followed. Mengistu would never again be seriously challenged from within Addis Ababa. Today, all of his major opponents are either distant or dead.

In 1977, Amnesty International issued a report revealing Mengistu's "increasingly serious violations of human rights in Ethiopia." Aside from the rampant murders, Amnesty reported that thousands of Ethiopians had been illegally imprisoned under inhumane conditions and subjected to "severe beating...electric shock...sexual torture, including the rape of women...the pulling out and hammering of toe and finger nails...dipping the vic-

tim in hot oil...forcible feeding with urine and mud."

By 1986, when *The Economist's World Human Rights Guide* damned Mengistu for his "many extremes of torture...beatings, hot oil, electric shock, genital torture," he had already—with the aid of his new benefactor, the Soviet Union—begun employing new tactics of oppression.

In the north of Ethiopia, where he is fighting two of the many rebel groups that have formed against him, Mengistu's massive military campaigns in the midst of severe drought were a major cause of famine. The systematic scorching of farmland, the destruction of crops and killing of oxen, and the constant air and napalm attacks forced the people of Eritrea to live in cities they have burrowed into the earth, surfacing at night to tend their ravaged fields.

After throwing a lavish celebration of his rise to power in September 1984 at a cost of some \$100 million, Mengistu appealed to the West for famine relief—wary that a famine of immense proportion might topple his government as the famine of 1973 helped bring down Haile Selassie.

Since then, he has used much of the nearly \$5 billion raised by international relief agencies to implement several ongoing programs of social control: resettlement of 1.5 million Ethiopians from their homelands in the north to the distant south and "villagization," which will gather up 33 million from the countryside into concentration centers. Already 620,000 have been resettled in such a brutal fashion that at least 100,000 died in the process.

When Bob Geldof came to Addis Ababa in November 1985, it was a tidier city than the one of seven years before. The bodies of the children that animals had come to pick at had been

cleaned up and dumped into mass graves.

Geldof's entourage lodged at one of the finest of hotels, the Addis Hilton, replete with pool, tennis courts, fine restaurants, bars, and nightclub. From here, Geldof and his associate Kevin Jenden went to meet with officials of Mengistu's Relief and Rehabilitation Commission (RRC), along with representatives of 47 relief agencies working in Ethiopia. An account of this meeting appears in the recent book *With Geldof in Africa* by British journalists David Blundy and Paul Valley. Holding up an article in *The Wall Street Journal* containing charges by a Boston-based group of anthropologists, Cultural Survival, that between 50,000 and 100,000 people had died as a result of the resettlement program, Geldof asked, "Is this true or not?"

"I've read it," answered Father Jack Finucane of Concern, another relief group, "and I don't believe it." Everyone gathered agreed with Finucane, but one of the senior aid officials slipped the British journalists a note saying, "Do not expect anyone to speak freely while the man in the blue suit is here." That man was Berhane Deressa, head of the RRC.

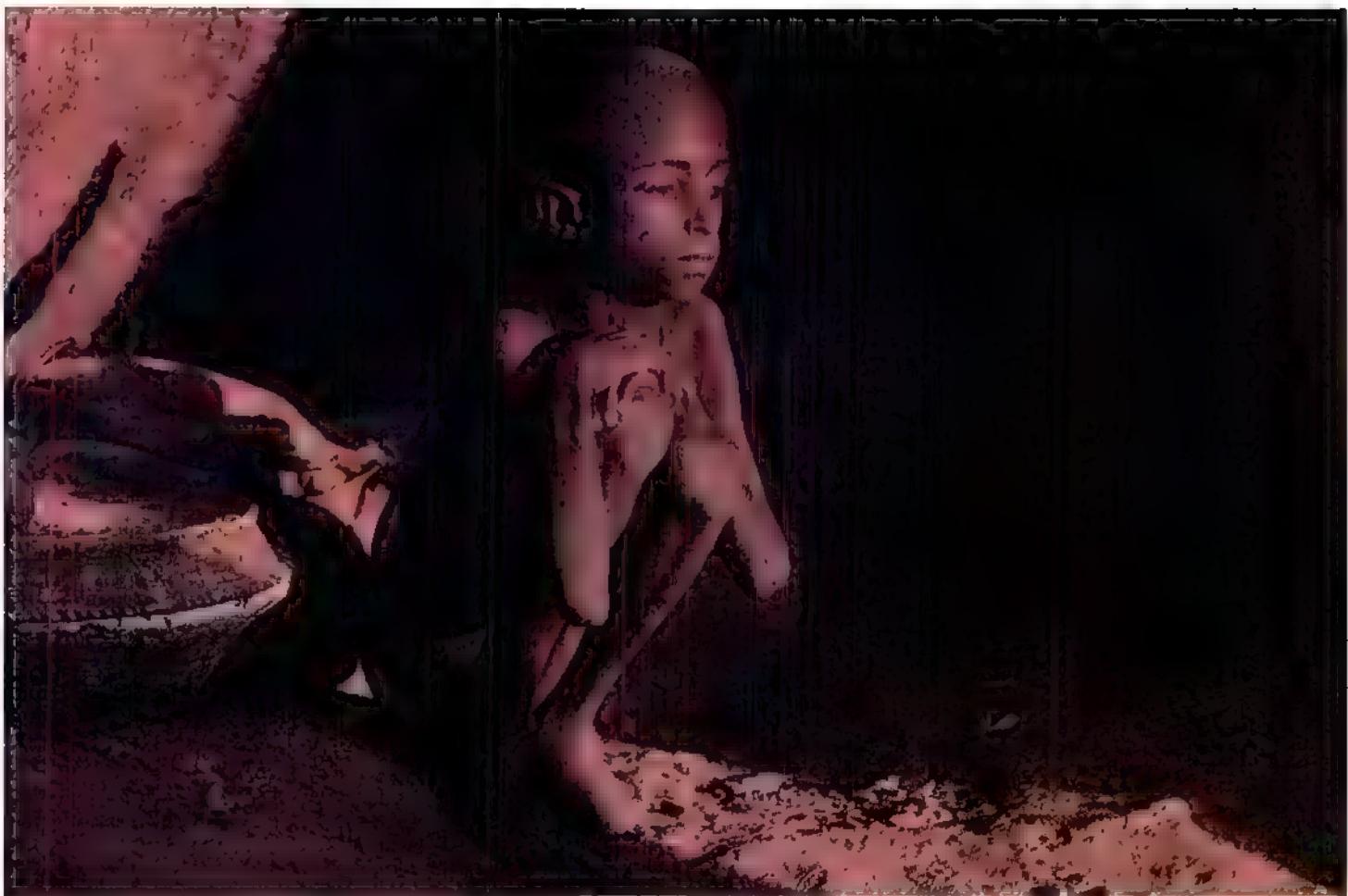
Later, away from RRC officials, Geldof was given an honest assessment of resettlement. Everyone who had been in the same room now agreed: it was a disaster. "They suspected that the motive behind the government's program was more political than humanitarian," write Blundy and Valley. But Geldof and the others continued to ignore what was clear—that the Ethiopian government was killing its own people.

Michael Fiszbin of the French medical group *Médecins sans Frontières* lashed out at what he had heard. Blundy and Valley quote MSF (and the Red Cross) as stating, "We cannot support a program when we can not lay down the barest criteria, that people are not forced to go; that families are not broken up; that people get basic provisions when they arrive. We do not approve of resettlement. We cannot help carry it out."

Geldof disagreed. "If we had been in existence during the Second World War and we heard that people were dying in concentration camps, would we



Photographs on previous page, above, and opposite by Anthony Suau, Black Star.



refuse to give them food and aid in those camps? Of course not. The same principle applies here."

Geldof had arrived in this seat of a criminal government by greeting Berhane Deressa of the RRC with hugs and enthusiasm that belied the moral repugnance burning inside him. Amid much backslapping and laughter, the two men launched into some verbal jousting over ideology: "You Marxist bastard"; "You capitalist swine." And then there were more laughs and slaps on the back.

The climax of Geldof's tour of Ethiopia was his return to the city of Korem, which he had first visited after the Band Aid record to witness in person the tragedy of starvation. Now the wide plateau high in the mountains of north central Ethiopia had been touched by bits of green, and the sea of tents and flesh had been diminished. The population had been reduced from 85,000 to a more manageable 23,000. Except for the pervasive stench the suffering had left behind, at first Korem appeared much the better. But it wasn't.

Two days after Geldof and his entourage pulled out of Korem, soldiers from the nearby garrison, along with government workers swinging sticks, rounded up some 600 famine victims onto trucks owned by Save the Children and sent them on the brutal journey south to a resettlement camp. The act was so vicious that another 10,000 fled into the hills. *Medicins sans Frontières*

complained so vehemently about this that they were threatened with expulsion.

At the same time, MSF's pleas to open an intensive feeding center in the town of Wollo were being turned down by the government. MSF, with doctors and nutritionists only meters from where 3,000 children lay dying for want of the readily available food, was prevented from distributing any food without government approval. Each day they found more bodies of dead children who had wandered along the road in a desperate bid for help.

"After five months of requests, we realized that all who could have taken advantage of the feeding center had died," says Dr. Rony Brauman, president of MSF. "Three thousand children had died just a few meters away from medical and nutritional teams—from a place where all the means were gathered to save them."

MSF's open outburst over human rights violations and the blatant misuse and manipulation of famine relief by the Ethiopian government finally led to their expulsion from the tragic country last December.

The tragic news from Korem reached Bob Geldof in London two days later. But it did not jar him from his determined course to do business in Ethiopia. Nor did the inhumane genocide of 3,000 children in Wollo at the same time.

"MSF unfortunately got evicted for their political views," Geldof recently stated, commenting that the agency "seems to have allowed itself to be used as pawns" by those against the Mengistu government.

"I said as early as January 1985, I will shake hands with the devil on my left and on my right to get to the people we are meant to help. Unlike MSF, wounded

pride does not come into it."

So, in November 1985, while Geldof was backslapping and kidding with the head of Ethiopia's RRC, making the first of his "deals with the devil," in another part of Addis Ababa, according to Amnesty International, 60 political enemies of Mengistu, including a former Ethiopian senator and an assistant minister of education, were being taken from their frigid cells in the wine cellar of the former emperor's palace and secretly executed without trial.

"I am now convinced," says Dr. Brauman, "that the most useful assistance that we can provide Ethiopians is to renounce publicly and loudly the massive human rights violations and stop supporting a policy which is creating starvation. This should be the role of the United Nations."

But it isn't.

So removed from the causes of massive suffering in Ethiopia is the United Nations that despite Ethiopia being cited as the worst government on Earth regarding human rights, and in the face of consistent and specific examples of abuses that Amnesty International has flooded the world body with for more than a decade, there has not been even a single attempt by the U.N. to investigate the allegations.

The car bearing Senator Ted Kennedy and his children Kara and Teddy pulled up on a hill high above the town of Makelle, and they looked down upon the tens of thousands of famine victims huddled in the massive relief camp below. It was December 19, 1984, and the Kennedys had come to spend Christmas in Ethiopia. The Senator's account of

Above and opposite: Under Mengistu Haile Miriam's regime of torture and oppression, Ethiopians continue to die of starvation despite the millions of dollars donated for their relief.



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"One thousand children have been massacred in Addis Ababa," declared the Secretary General of the Swedish Save the Children Fund, "and their bodies, lying in the street, are ravaged by hyenas."

the trip became the cover story of *People* magazine. He wrote of their shock at the enormity of the crisis and his commitment "to see that America is doing enough." But as his children walked with him among throngs of emaciated, prideful Ethiopians, he noted, "Our hosts were reluctant to be candid, as if somehow they were at fault for the meager resources at hand." To which he told them, "I'm not here to find fault, but to help."

At the end of their two day stay at the Makelle camps, Kara turned to her father and asked, "If we have enough funding for weapons, why can't we have enough to save the lives of children?" Recalling the enormous famines suffered by India in the '60s, the Senator told her that the answer was Western aid and agricultural reforms.

This spring, Kennedy's special counsel, Jerry Tinker, returned to Ethiopia and reported that, "The message from Makelle and from other parts of Ethiopia is that a major human catastrophe was avoided. Our aid made a difference, a difference between life and death for millions."

While Kennedy's report circulated, so did another by Amnesty International that made it seem like the Senator was talking about a different Ethiopia. This message from Makelle concerned prisoners "being tortured by public security officers... beaten with metal bars, sticks, and whips while suspended from the ceiling by a rope, with the body tied into a contorted position nicknamed 'number eight.'"

The 1986 *World Human Rights Guide*, published by *The Economist*, lists violations by the Mengistu government, ranging from censorship to extrajudicial killings by members of the military, from indefinite detention without charge to the death penalty for unauthorized travel outside the country—a policy that is a clear danger to the more than 2.5 million Ethiopian refugees who have fled across the borders into Somalia and Sudan.

On his visit, Kennedy, a member of the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Policy, "remembered putting coins in the collection plate for Haile Selassie when I was a child." Today, his approach to Ethiopia hasn't changed, but the country has. And there are very real political reasons why Kennedy and other liberals in Congress refuse to recognize it, despite the fact that Congress publishes yearly reports on human rights violations there. These are reports that Kennedy sees, yet not once in his *People* article does he mention human rights violations. Kennedy doesn't want to appear to be a Republican by opposing Mengistu, while at the same time, others, such as the Congressional Black Caucus don't want to admit that anything could be wrong.

"The man in the blue suit," Berhane Deressa, also didn't want to believe that there was so much wrong with Ethiopia. But last May, Deressa suddenly defected to the West. He had arrived in New York City as part of a U.N. group of experts on refugees, to testify that Ethiopia had made a commitment to stop forceful resettlement of people.

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CAETANO VELOSO

"To the Brazilian people, he is a simple country boy from Bahia, the personification of *elegance*—of letting the good times roll. But his music is anything but simple. The best songs have the harmonic sophistication and the introspective dreaminess of the work of Erik Satie or Bill Evans, and their lyrics are poetry." —*The New Yorker*
Nonesuch (79121)

SCOTT JOHNSON

"John Somebody" mirrors the subterranean rumble, the welter of voices and other overt sounds of the city, with the cries of superamplified guitars hovering like angels above the fray. It's a compelling marriage of rock elements and classical formalism that doesn't shortchange either." —Robert Palmer, *N.Y. Times*
Nonesuch (79130)



[Photo credits: disc cover photo: MTC; concert photo: Jim Smeal]

KRONOS QUARTET

"A supercharged group of musical pioneers" (*L.A. Times*) performing works by Philip Glass, Conlon Nancarrow, Aulis Sallinen and Peter Sculthorpe—plus their most requested encore, Jimi Hendrix' "Purple Haze." Nonesuch (79121)

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Chris Conant

Gabriel, his eyelids and brows accented with black greasepaint, chuckles lightly and stops pacing.

Veteran field marshal Bill Graham gives Gabriel and his band their cue, and they scamper up the narrow steps to the platform stage to deliver one of the most superb sets of the entire *Conspiracy of Hope* tour, cresting with a tumultuous version of "Shock the Monkey."

Earlier, Gabriel had stated that the song was not about shock therapy but rather "just a love song, although it's not really seen as that. It refers to jealousy as a trigger for an animal nature to surface."

Onstage, Gabriel imbues the song with a vivid dash of affirmation, testifying that humanity has the will to resist its baser urges, just as the jailer, torturer, and executioner can be dissuaded from their odious duties.

The throng loves the transporting warmth of the singer, and later that evening, as the assembled Amnesty troupe (Bryan Adams, Joan Baez, Jackson Browne, the Neville Brothers, Lou Reed, et. al.) rushes before the footlights for the encore on "I Shall Be Released," Sting spies Gabriel ascending the stage steps.

"Come 'ere, mate," he calls out, hugging Peter with a hearty "well done" as they walk up together. Blooming on the old Carthusian's angular features is the fulfillment of finally belonging.

Several days after the Giants Stadium concert, Gabriel is in the Manhattan offices of Warner Bros. Records, taking stock of the whole whirlwind Amnesty tour and preparing to return to his family in Bath. Attired in his familiar dark clothing, he chats about the future, which may include a select schedule of dates to showcase songs from *So*. The talk turns to another song about psychic and physical torment that Gabriel decided to put on the new record, "We Do What We're Told (Milgram's 37)" is Gabriel's direct appeal for faith in life. The song refers to experiments conducted in New Haven, Connecticut, in the early 1960s by the late Stanley Milgram that tested obedience to authority versus allegiance to one's moral code.

"Various volunteers for the experiment were divided into two groups: 'students' and 'teachers.' The student was connected to electric terminals, and the teacher was put in the laboratory in front of a metal box with buttons that were said to be capable of generating electric shocks to the student. The teacher was then asked to give a memory test to the student and at each mistake was ordered by the scientist conducting the experiment to increase the voltage of electricity—so he thought he was participating in an experiment on punishment and learning."

"But actually," says Gabriel, "the 'student' was an actor, just acting the effects of electric shocks, and the test was to see how far the 'teacher' would go in obeying the order to administer the shocks before he would rebel against authority. In the main experiment, sixty-three percent of the participants were prepared to administer enough electricity to injure the person on the other end."

"At first this seems a very negative thing," says Gabriel, "but I was comforted that some had the strength to rebel, and in the *So* version of the song, which I've been performing in concert since around 1980, the emphasis is shifted to the positive side. I find it scary, particularly with the rise of the so-called Moral Majority, that there's such a readiness to judge other people. In Christ's words, 'Judge not, that ye not be judged.'"

In Peter Gabriel's words, this self-judgment: "There are three layers to me. The first is alert, amiable, and at ease with the world. Then there is the sad, small boy. Finally, there is this instinctive and at times aggressive character. I fluctuate between the three,

but to strangers, the third layer only comes out in the music."

And it is the third layer of Gabriel that he himself knows the least. It is the mighty, adept, efficacious side of himself that he feels in performance but cannot relocate when the fury is spent.

He seeks clues to his nature in his father—"my introvert side"—and in the social, organizational, and musical skills of his mother—"my extrovert side"—but they are not accessible personalities. "They were compassionate, loving parents, but like so many from the English middle classes, they had difficulty in expressing emotions."

Anything felt or thought but left unexpressed becomes a secret, and as he came of age, Gabriel found that neither the education he was assaulted with at Charterhouse nor the compulsory chapel attendance intended to salve his bruised psyche offered any acknowledgment of the secrets of private experience. Only rock 'n' roll provided this, and it demands total surrender.

Gabriel has become a confidant of psychotherapist R. D. Laing's and a disciple of John Lilly's sensory-deprivation tanks, where in the perfect darkness of saline-solution-filled confines he can float naked and dream without boundaries. He is also a voracious reader of Swiss psychologist Carl Gustav Jung, who warns any would-be rock star that "the (protective) persona is the individual's system of adaptation to the world. Every calling or profession has its own characteristic persona. The danger is that people become identical with their personas—the professor with his textbook, the tenor with his voice."

"I have a selfish lifestyle in a selfish world," Gabriel frets, and he senses the solution to his own dilemma will be more elusive than the one his wife Jill settled on in the wake of their marital reconciliation.

"I was brought up to be a wife and a mother, but around me the roles of women were changing," she says. "It was OK to have a job. I felt very frustrated." And so she took one—counseling other married couples. "I used to watch Peter sing and think I'd like a bit of this person in real life. It worried me. And, of course, I resented his success. But I was attracted to it."

Is there no solution to the conflict between creative spark and personal desire? Carl Jung says in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul* that when a form of 'art' is primarily personal it deserves to be treated as if it were a neurosis. The personal aspect is a limitation—and even a sin—in the realm of art. A great work of art is like a dream; for all its apparent obviousness, it does not explain itself and is never unequivocal.

So the search, the frustration, the longing for transcendence goes on.

Meantime, Peter Gabriel can be found in Bath, raising his daughters, wrestling with new songs like one about murdered Chilean singer Victor Jara, or arranging music for exhibits by avant-garde artists Stephen Rollow and Malcolm Poynter. He also wants a greater hand in film scoring than was provided by his work on *Birdy* and the songs he contributed to *Against All Odds* ("Walk Through the Fire") and *Gremlins* ("Out Out"). After all, it was an invitation from director William Friedkin (*The Exorcist*) in 1974 to write an original script that spelled the last straw for Gabriel and the jealousy-strained *Genesis*; in the brittle denouement, Friedkin's beckoning was forsaken.

Yet not forgotten. What was required, then as now, was a proper facility for brainstorming. To this end, Gabriel is devoting the winter to supervising the founding of a "future arts center" that will have two recording studios and much high-tech audiovisual hardware for the "experience designing" he wants to spend his forties doing.

"The idea of taking the funk on 'Sledgehammer' to a higher level is exhilarating, too," he says. "I used French-African drummer Manu Katché in conjunction with Wayne Jackson of the Memphis Horns on the



Gabriel's songs are fraught with haunting, searching, obsession, and the terrible nearness of madness.

track, and it was a commanding blend of parallel heritages. I love writing more about romantic sexuality, and I need to discover ways to let my attraction to African funk be mutually enhancing for the participants."

Surely there's a well-worn route to that worthy hybrid, one that Gabriel has already intuitively alighted upon. For the word funk is a combination of the Ki-Kongo *lu-fuki*, meaning "bad body odor," and *fumet*, the Creole term for "aroma of food and wine." As for any transcultural karmic rewards, well, in Kango the smell of a hardworking person carries luck to all those it reaches.

Whenever Gabriel leaves his hearth in the west of England during the remainder of 1986, he'll be on tour, plus hustling other musicians ("I've already asked Phil Collins") into appearing at proposed simultaneous live concerts in East and West Berlin on September 16 to celebrate United Nations Peace Day. "We Do What We're Told (Milgram's 37)" will be one of the featured songs in his performance.

"I know why I took so long to record it," Gabriel mulls. "I think I had to wrestle with the subject matter until I could find an interpretation that identified the heartening side of the story, but that also had the ring of objective reality." The song's chorus, which he slowly recites, is simple and eloquent:

One doubt
One voice
One war
One truth
One dream

"I take dreams very seriously," he says softly. "I think everyone should."



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SYMPATHY from p. 69

But 10 days into the conference, Deressa got word that back in Addis Ababa the main party man who had managed the resettlement had reinstated the brutal program, saying, "The program will not change for a handful of grain."

"The arrogance of this man, to say that," fumes Deressa. "I decided I could not continue with this mindless policy that was being pursued. And I would not return to the policy of arbitrary arrest. People who challenge these policies are arrested. And so, ironically enough, I became the refugee that I was sent here to study. I honestly felt that I could not sell my country to the world while it pursued these policies and at the same time live with my conscience."

One of the biggest stirs surrounding the Live Aid concert one year ago was who was turning down the invitation to perform and why. The most important and controversial rejection came from Huey Lewis who said, "There are questions as to whether the food is actually getting to the starving people or not. We felt, having done the USA for Africa thing, that we should wait and watch that. The jury's still out. The prudent thing to do is to see how that money translates into food for people before we do another one."

When he heard this, Harry Belafonte, one of the key organizers of Live Aid, was livid.

"I would suggest that Mr. Lewis get his facts together and that he stop being disruptive and divisive," shot back Belafonte to a reporter. "If he is such a hotshot with his mouth, let him get on a plane and go sit in a camp."

It is clear now that Lewis raised the right questions, but Belafonte's bitter defensiveness is even more revealing and symptomatic of the actions of a number of important black figures.

"Why do Jesse Jackson, members of the Black Caucus, stars like Harry Belafonte and Lionel Richie only get arrested in front of the South African Embassy?" asks Yonas Deressa, president of the Ethiopian Refugees, Education, and Relief Foundation and brother of Berhane. "Apartheid—abhorrent, repugnant, Nazi-like as it is in terms of policy—you don't see hundreds of thousands of people dying from starvation in South



Anthony Suau/Black Star

Relief agencies, the U.N., American politicians—all seem determined to ignore the human rights abuses that allow food to be used as a weapon in Ethiopia

Africa because of government policy. You don't see 1.8 million people perish. You don't see 620,000 black South Africans being put in concentration camps, slave labor camps."

A call to Jesse Jackson's Operation PUSH headquarters in Chicago inquiring about his organization's stance on the severe human rights violations by the Mengistu government in Ethiopia is met with hostility; PUSH has not looked into the situation.

"I haven't had an opportunity to in any sense examine that," says Reverend George Redick, vice-president at large. "The country still needs aid whether there are violations or not. Could it be that this is a way of keeping aid from black countries in Africa?"

"Why do you suddenly want to talk about human rights violations in Ethiopia? Why aren't you talking about human rights violations in South Africa? It's not relevant is it, because, of course, they're a white government against black people."

Told that the policies of Ethiopia, not South Africa were the reason for the phone call, Reverend Redick hangs up.

What we're dealing with here is one of the biggest scandals that's ever taken place."

Gayle Smith, a relief worker in Ethiopia, still shows the pain of the reality of what is happening in Ethiopia when she tries to describe its tragic absurdities

"There's no public accountability in any of this," she continues. "Nobody has given the public the information to judge whether what the relief organizations are doing is right or wrong or fair or neutral or humanitarian or anything. No one is putting this story together comprehensively."

One reason is because many of the very organizations that have been in Ethiopia for years have long since ceased providing solutions; they've become part of the problem. The business of aid contains more than a fair opportunity for corruption. Groups like World Vision and Catholic Relief Services (CRS) justify their continued presence in Ethiopia by hiding behind the banner of humanitarianism.

Last January, a Federal inquiry was launched into the finances of one relief organization, the California-based International Christian Aid. Run by evangelist L. Joe Bass, ICA raised an estimated \$20 million in three months, none of which ever appeared in Africa, while ICA saw its bank account swell as famine went on in Africa.

"Groups like World Vision have more money than anybody has ever seen before because of Ethiopia," says Jack Shepard, a journalist who covers Third World countries and who wrote a book about Ethiopia's last famine in the early '70s. "They've got money in bank accounts making money. Just the interest is more money than they ever had. These groups are literally saying to themselves, 'What the hell should we do with this money?'"

Lawrence Pezzullo, the executive director of Catholic Relief Services, had a creative solution. While the agency was under attack from the government for spending only \$9 million of the \$52 million it had raised for African famine victims through a major fund drive in 1984, Pezzullo reportedly took a \$100,000 interest free personal loan from CRS.

It was not the first scandal at CRS. In 1982, the National Catholic Reporter exposed the agency's involvement in Indonesian-occupied East Timor. "Human rights groups have long alleged that [CRS and the International Committee of the Red Cross] let Indonesians use food aid to lure the Timorese into resettlement areas where their lives could be carefully controlled and resistance crushed."

This is exactly what is going on in Ethiopia.

Finally, there is another reason Ethiopia's agony continues unrelieved: In the face of the monster that is Mengistu Haile Miriam too many people—Bob Geldof, Ted Kennedy, Jesse Jackson, and others—have chosen not to pressure Mengistu's hideous government to end the oppression. Instead, they make their deals and remain silent, while hundreds of thousands of Ethiopians are wiped away.

"There are good people in this country," says Gayle Smith, "who if given all the information will act with a conscious sense that what is going on in Ethiopia shouldn't be happening on this planet."

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What happened was, this woman stopped me on the street and said, "Would you like to be an extra in a party scene in a ZZ Top video?" I tried to pretend this kind of thing happened to me often; in other words, that I was a person who could barely step out of the house without being discovered. That was why I forgot to ask her if I would get paid.

"What would I have to do?" I said.

"Oh, it'll be fun," she said. "You go out on this yacht for half the day."

I liked the idea of going out on a yacht. Anyway, for half the day, what did I have to lose? "Sure," I said, "Why not."

A few days later I got a call from some woman named Ellie, telling me to be on a yacht named the Selisa at nine o'clock in the morning. I should wear "party clothing." So I wore what I always wear to parties: tight black pants, sneakers, and a dirty black sweatshirt.

I got to the yacht at 9 in the morning; maybe I was still half asleep, but it seemed to me that, if a person wanted to, they could call the Selisa a yacht, but as far as I was concerned, it was a boat. There were some men moving equipment at the front end, but none of them spoke to me. I pointed to a ramp. "Is this how I'm supposed to get on?" I said.

"Don't fall off," one of the men said, without turning around.

I crossed over and went to the back of the conveyance. There were three or four people sitting in a room with leatherette couches and chairs. None of them spoke to me. So I went into the other room. There was a bartender behind a counter covered with coffee cups and Danish. "I'll have a cup of coffee," I said.

"Last week," the man said, "I was a bartender at a party for Pat Benatar."

I looked around at the other extras. As usual, I was dressed inappropriately. The other ingenues were 10 years younger and wearing slut boots, vinyl belts, and hot pink sleaze shirts. It wasn't that I didn't have an outfit like that—I had worn mine to Le Cirque the night before. But I distinctly remembered being told to wear jeans and sneakers. The makeup artist blinked at me sadly and told me to sit in her chair.

"Go upstairs if your makeup is done," said Ellie when she saw me. Just then the members of ZZ Top came on board.

Two of them had the most luxurious of beards. Probably it had taken them years and years to grow the beards, which were long and sparse and flowed below their waists. They were clean beards, without foodstuffs; how fortunate it was, I thought, that these two men, with their long beards, had found one another, because while it was somewhat of a problem for me to look at the men, obviously it was no trouble for either of them to look at each other and admire their accomplishments.

Then one of them spoke. "I need a scissors," he said. Everyone jumped.

"Who has a scissors?" Ellie said. She turned to the makeup artist. "Do you have a scissors?"

"What kind of scissors?" the makeup artist said.

"Just a scissors," Ellie said.

"What for?" the makeup woman said



Chris Cornell

I Was an Elderly Teenage Bimbo for MTV

True confessions by Tama Janowitz

again.

"For his beard," Ellie said. I looked up with interest.

"No!" the man with the beard shouted. "No, no, no! Not the beard! I have a loose thread on my collar." Then the costume girl came and took them downstairs to change.

The yacht was under way, headed down the Hudson River toward the World Trade Center and great adventures.

The three other girls came upstairs, followed by two college-aged guys dressed in shorts and Hawaiian print shirts. We stood near a table covered with barbecued chicken and a vat of green potato salad.

"Move over here," a woman said, pushing the back of my legs into a low metal tub filled with ice and bottles of beer. She grabbed a chicken wing and thrust it into my hand. Then a man appeared.

"In this scene," he said, picking up a large video camera, "in this scene you're

all dancing, partying, and having a good time. I want you to go really wild."

An assistant turned on a tape cassette of ZZ Top. "Dance!" the man said.

We rehearsed the dancing. I tried to look enthusiastic, even though under no circumstance could I ever imagine myself dancing enthusiastically to ZZ Top on the roof of a boat with five typecast strangers.

"Put some streamers around their necks," the woman told the assistant. So he threw red and pink streamers over us.

"OK," the man said, "This time, when you dance, go really crazy. You—" he pointed at a girl with a blond frou-frou hairdo—"you shake up the bottle of beer while you dance and spray it on everyone."

This time the camera was on. The boat began to rock from side to side. The sky grew overcast. We danced wildly to the tape, a boy picked up a handful of greenish potato salad and stuffed it into his mouth, the other boy pretended to play the barbecue tongs as if it was a guitar, the

girl shook up the bottle and sprayed it over all of us. The crepe-paper streamers, wet with beer, began to bleed streaks of bloody red down everyone's clothes. The girls jiggled back and forth, laughing furiously, clapping their hands. The boat was rocking harder now, my legs smashed into the metal tub of beer. Near the Statue of Liberty, I began to think I might possibly throw up. Yet I noticed the camera focusing on my face. I smiled wanly as I danced, shaking my head from side to side to demonstrate joy and good will.

"OK," the man said. "Now, in this next scene, pick up this vat of chicken and toss it overboard, vat and all."

"I feel sick," the boy who had eaten the potato salad said. "That potato salad—there was something wrong."

"Now, you have to get it right," the man said. "Look like you're having a good time, count to three, and toss." We crowded around the cold chicken, counted to three and the chicken and container went sailing out over the railing. We huddled together, watching as it tumbled into the water. The camera panned to follow. Then we all looked at each other. "Well, clap!" the cameraman shouted. "Applaud! This is fun! Hahahaha!"

We began to applaud politely and then stopped. "Was that OK?" the blond said.

"It was okay when you threw the chicken," the man said. "But then you all just stood around like dumbos."

"OK, OK," the woman said. "You have one last shot." From under a plastic tarp she took out a large platter of spareribs covered in yellowish mold.

"This time, after it hits the water, jump up and down and applaud," the man said.

So we did. I tried to look as if throwing moldy spareribs off boats into the Hudson was something I not only did often, but with pleasure. "OK, that's it," the man said. "You're done. Please stay up here, you're in the way downstairs."

The boat was going no place, circling endlessly in order to keep the Statue of Liberty nearby. The faster we circled, the more it rocked. It began to rain. The other girls went downstairs. I thought maybe the fresh air would do me some good, but then I thought, "If I don't go downstairs, I am going to die." Something was terribly wrong: I had the sensation of having swallowed a quart of gasoline.

"What's this a video for, anyway?" I asked Ellie.

"It's a promo," she said. "MTV is having a contest—there's one winner from each state. The winners get to go out on a yacht like this." What kind of contest is that? The prize, I thought, was exactly the same as a punishment. I found a chair and slumped into it, shutting my eyes.

"Taking a nap?" someone said. I opened my eyes. It was one of the members of ZZ Top, the taller bearded one, dressed in a yachting costume—white pants, a blue blazer, a captain's hat.

"Dying," I mumbled.

They're hairy high and low: elderly teenage bimbo Tama Janowitz (left), SPIN haircut editor Glenn O'Brien (center), and ZZ Top guitarist Billy Gibbons shake it loose together.

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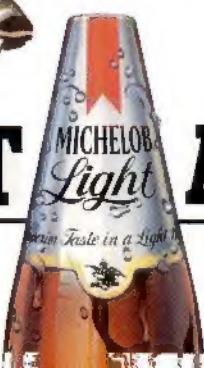
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